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May 16, 2022

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## **Law Enforcement Safety Idea Sponsored by Rep. Willhite Becomes Law**

**Wellington, Fla.** – Last week, **SB 1046 - Public Records/Law Enforcement Geolocation Information** was signed into law by Governor DeSantis. The House version of that idea, **HB 773**, was sponsored by **Representative Matt Willhite (D-Wellington)**.

This legislation exempts public records requirements for law enforcement geolocation information held by a law enforcement agency. Geolocation information refers to the information collected using a GPS or other mapping or locational system that tracks the location or movement of law enforcement officers or law enforcement vehicles. Exempting the geolocation information from public records requirements protects law enforcement officers while they are on patrol and protects the exposure of their residence. Exempt information must be released upon the request from a state or federal law enforcement agency; when a court approves the release of the information to a person who sufficiently justifies why it should be disclosed, and when law enforcement geolocation information is requested in a criminal, civil or administrative proceeding.

After the signing of this bill, **Representative Willhite** issued the following statement:

“This law closes a loophole in public records laws that allowed requestors of public records to obtain information from a police officer’s in-vehicle GPS. We understand that many law enforcement officers drive their law enforcement vehicle to and from work on top of using the vehicle while they are at work. In other words, police officers often take their law enforcement vehicle home – where their families live. The potential exposure of a law enforcement officers’ residence puts the officers and their families at unnecessary risk. As we celebrate National Police Week, I am thankful that the governor recognized the legislature’s intent to protect our officers as they continue to protect our residents each day.”

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