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Hawaii bill would limit individuals' public records requests

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By CATHY BUSSEWITZ
Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) - A bill in the Hawaii Legislature could limit some people's rights to file records requests with public agencies.

The proposal would allow a state office to declare a person a "vexatious records requester." The state office would have to find that the person made requests "in bad faith or with the intent to be a nuisance."

Brian Black of the Civil Beat Center for Law in the Public Interest opposes the bill. He says it strips citizens of the fundamental right to access public records.

But several state offices including the University of Hawaii support the bill. They say there's a need for balance between the public's rights and time spent responding to record requests.

The House Finance Committee advanced the bill Thursday.

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