

Senate Judiciary Committee

Jennifer Horgan 271-3092

HB 259-FN, relative to the records of the probate court.

Hearing Date: March 21, 2017

Time Opened: 9:02 a.m.

Time Closed: 9:16 a.m.

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Carson, Lasky, French and Gannon

Members of the Committee Absent : Senator Hennessey

Bill Analysis : This bill requires registers of probate to coordinate with the secretary of state the preservation of closed files having the potential for historical significance.

Sponsors :

Rep. Horrigan

Rep. J. Belanger

Sen. Gray

Who supports the bill: Representative Horrigan

Who opposes the bill: No one

Summary of testimony presented in support :

Representative Horrigan (provided written testimony)

- This bill addresses the Registers of Probate's duty of preserving the county's historic probate court files.
- There is a House Bill to restore all of the duties to the Register of Probate.
- The Secretary of State is already responsible for preserving vital records in the state archives.
- There is a State Archivist who is an expert at preserving these files.
- The bill was amended in the House because of a desire to retain the flexibility of using electronic or paper forms.
- Senator Lasky asked who determines if a document is historical.
 - It is outlined in existing law.
- Senator Lasky asked if that is something that needs to be changed.
 - No.
- The Registers of Probate have no funding to do this work, while the State Archivist receives fees to support their work.

Summary of testimony presented in opposition :

N/A

Future Action: Ought to Pass

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Date Hearing Report completed: March 22, 2017