

1982 WL 189132 (S.C.A.G.)

Office of the Attorney General

State of South Carolina

January 8, 1982

***1 Re: Availability of individual telephone bills of members of the South Carolina House of Representatives under the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act**

Mrs. Lois T. Shealy
Clerk of the House
South Carolina House of Representatives
P. O. Box 11867
Columbia, SC 29211

Dear Mrs. Shealy:

In your letter of December 17, 1981, you pose the question as to whether or not copies of individual members' telephone bills are available, upon request, under the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act. Under Section 30-4-50(6) of the South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, as amended, known as the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act, information dealing with the expenditure of public funds is specifically made available to the public as public information. Therefore, the amount of a member's telephone bill, if that bill was paid for with public funds, would be available, upon request, under the Act. However, Section 30-4-40(a)(2) exempts from disclosure information of a personal nature where public disclosure would constitute an invasion of personal privacy. The furnishing of individual numbers called by the individual members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, I believe, would fall within this exemption. Additionally, from the bill there is no means of determining who made the call or to whom the call was placed. Therefore, it is the opinion of this office that the amount of the bill would be available under the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act, upon request, but that copies of the individual bills containing the numbers called by the House Member would be exempt from disclosure on the basis that disclosure would constitute an unreasonable invasion of personal privacy.

I hope that this reply will be of assistance to you. Please do not hesitate to call on me for further elaboration should such be necessary.

Sincerely,

Judith Evans Finuf
Assistant Attorney General

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