

HB 1785 -- UNIFORM PUBLIC EXPRESSION PROTECTION ACT

SPONSOR: Perkins

This bill establishes the "Uniform Public Expression Protection Act".

The bill relates to causes of action filed against individuals who exercise certain constitutional rights. The bill specifies that, when a person, defined in the bill as "an individual, estate, trust, partnership, business or nonprofit entity, governmental unit, or other legal entity", has a cause of action filed against him or her or it based upon his or her or its communication in a governmental proceeding or on an issue under consideration in a governmental proceeding, or when he or she or it exercises his or her or its right of freedom of speech or of the press, the right to assemble, or the right of association, that person may file a special motion to dismiss the cause of action.

The bill establishes procedures for such special motions to dismiss. The bill specifies under which circumstances a court may award costs, reasonable attorneys' fees, and reasonable litigation expenses. The provisions of the bill apply to civil actions filed on or after August 28, 2024.

This bill is similar to HB 750 (2023) and HB 2624 (2022).