

STATE OF NEW YORK

2004

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 16, 2021

Introduced by Sens. JACKSON, BIAGGI -- read twice and ordered printed,
and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Investigations
and Government Operations

AN ACT to amend the public officers law, in relation to permitting
assessment of certain fees and costs upon wrongful denial of access to
records under the freedom of information law

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assem-
bly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. Paragraph (c) of subdivision 4 of section 89 of the public
officers law, as amended by chapter 453 of the laws of 2017, is amended
to read as follows:

(c) The court in such a proceeding[~~+(i)~~] may assess, against such
agency involved, reasonable attorney's fees and other litigation costs
reasonably incurred by such person in any case under the provisions of
this [~~section in which~~] article in which:

(i) such person has substantially prevailed[~~7~~] and [~~when~~] the court
finds that such agency had no such reasonable basis for denying access;
or

(ii) the agency failed to respond to a request or appeal within the
statutory time; [~~and (ii) shall assess, against such agency involved,
reasonable attorney's fees and other litigation costs reasonably
incurred by such person in any case under the provisions of this section
in which such person has substantially prevailed~~] or

(iii) the record is substantially disclosed following the initiation
of such proceeding but prior to a judicial determination and the court
finds that the agency [~~had no~~] lacked a reasonable basis in law for
[~~denying access~~] withholding the record.

Nothing contained herein shall be construed to abridge or deny any
right or remedy available under article eighty-six of the civil practice
law and rules.

§ 2. This act shall take effect on the first of September next
succeeding the date on which it shall have become a law.

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[~~-~~] is old law to be omitted.

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