STATE OF NEW YORK

6192

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

March 10, 2021

Introduced by M. of A. THIELE -- read once and referred to the Committee on Governmental Operations

AN ACT to amend the public officers law, in relation to permitting assessment of certain civil penalties 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 Assembly, 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 such person has substantially prevailed, and when 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 and the court finds that the agency had no reasonable basis for denying access. **Where the court finds that the agency had no reasonable basis for denying access, a civil penalty of not more than fifteen hundred dollars may also be imposed. An agency or public official who does not promptly comply with a court order under this act is subject to a civil penalty of not more than five hundred dollars per day until the public records are provided.**

§ 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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