KAPID CITY JOURNAL (Jan. 28): Gov. Dennis Daugaard has pledged to make education reform one of the top priorities of his second term, and last year his Open Government Task Force submitted eight bills to the 2013 legislative session. The Legislature rejected all but one of the proposed lines.

One of the proposed lines was one that would make policy logs and criminal booking photos public. Sen. Craig T. Baril, R-Hill City, has introduced a revised bill this year that would give local entities the power to keep the information private. Sen. Billie Sutton bills maintaining the confidentiality of criminal justice information and clean government, while allowing local authorities to choose whether to release the information. However, the bill fails to specify “information about calls or reports of the date, time and location as well as general subject matter of the call is not confidential criminal justice information and must be released to the public.”

A joint resolution would require the support of two-thirds of the Senate to make the information public. The bill would allow the public to purchase the information at the cost of printing.

The passage of Sutton’s bill would be a win for the South Dakota Open Government Coalition and those who support transparency in government. The coalition is working to increase public awareness of the laws and to encourage local authorities to publicly release the information.

At the moment, local authorities have the discretion to release or withhold the information. However, Sutton’s bill would give the public the right to request the information and would require local authorities to release it if the public requests it.

Sutton’s bill would also require local authorities to keep the information confidential if the release of the information would constitute a danger to the public safety or would violate the privacy of an individual. This is a significant improvement over the current law, which only allows local authorities to keep the information confidential if the release of the information would constitute a danger to the public safety.

In conclusion, Sutton’s bill is a win for transparency in government. It would give the public the right to request information about calls and reports, and it would require local authorities to release the information if the public requests it. This is a significant improvement over the current law, which only allows local authorities to keep the information confidential if the release of the information would constitute a danger to the public safety.

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