

HB 1151 -- CIVIL ACTIONS TO PROTECT PUBLIC EXPRESSION

SPONSOR: Perkins

This bill creates the "Uniform Public Expression Protection Act", which 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 based upon his or her communication in a governmental proceeding or on an issue under consideration in a governmental proceeding, or when he or she exercises his or her 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 Act apply to civil actions filed on or after August 28, 2021.