

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Subject: OFP; eliminating respondent filing fees

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This bill eliminates court filing fees for the respondent in an Order for Protection matter. (The fee is approximately \$324.)

The filing fee is currently waived in statute for the petitioner, but there is no reference to the respondent's filing fee. Also, under statute, the respondent may be ordered to pay the petitioner's filing fee. In practice, some judges waive the respondent's filing fee or the respondent may seek an IFP ("in forma pauperis") waiver based on income requirements. The bill waives the filing fee for the respondent and strikes language allowing the court to direct the respondent to pay the petitioner's fees and costs.