

# Keep Ohio on PAHR

## Provide Access to Historical Records!

### Ohio House Bill 139

#### Quick Facts-Access to Historical Records

Provide Access to Historical Records!

Historical records are important. They provide valuable insight into our collective history as a state, as a society, and as families. Ohio currently has inconsistencies in regards to opening up certain types of historical records such as:

- Adoptions
- Lunacy Records
- County Home Registers
- Children's Home Registers
- Inheritance Tax Records
- Veterans' Relief Records.

In some counties, these records are available to researchers, while in other counties these records are permanently closed.

What this legislation does:

1. Lifts access restrictions on those records schedule for *permanent* retention, 100 years after the date the record is created.
2. Affects only those records with a permanent retention or those deemed historical by the State Archives.
3. Opens up records that provide valuable information and insight into our collective history, our state, our society, and our families.
4. Allows records to be made available in easy groupings 100 years after creation. Opening up records at 100 years would not involve researching the names on the records to determine whether a person is still alive.
5. Saves time and resources (judges' time in review, storage space for inaccessible records, redaction time, copy costs, etc.).
6. Brings Ohio in line with other states who have passed similar legislation.
7. Creates consistency among counties, providing access to records across the state.

What this legislation *does not* do:

1. Force governments to retain any records longer than their current retention period.
2. Override confidentiality of those records covered by attorney/client privilege.
3. Open people up for pain or ridicule. Attitudes about adoptions and mental illnesses have changed over the years. What was once considered a mental illness may be recognized today as a treatable medical condition.