

Dear Government and Elections Committee,

I am writing to you in regard to H.B. 5124, AN ACT CONCERNING THE PRESERVATION OF HISTORICAL RECORDS AND ACCESS TO RESTRICTED RECORDS IN THE STATE ARCHIVES. I am an active voter and I staunchly oppose this bill, as currently written for the following reasons and summarily ask that names not be made public:

- 1) I understand the value in preserving government and medical records for statistical purposes only. I disagree with making government and medical records public that also publicly reveal individual names. This bill violates an individual's privacy, which should extend indefinitely into death.
  
- 2) This bill will negatively impact living individuals and prevent them from seeking out mental health assistance because they will not want their medical records made public, even after their death. Mental health stigma is prevalent, even more so after the tragedy at Sandy Hook. There needs to be fewer barriers to seeking out assistance, not more. This bill will create an additional barrier because people do value how they will be viewed posthumously.
  
- 3) This bill calls for medical records to be made available 50 years after an individual's death. This bill is not taking into consideration that 50 years is not a lot of time, especially considering family members of the deceased individual will still be living. Families would also have their right to privacy taken away if this bill is passed because the family's surname will be public. Mental illness can be genetic and thus potentially passed onto family members, family members who will be living 50 years after an individual's death. The stigma of mental illness will not be reduced by much in the next 50, 100 or 150 years. It is unfair to place that stigma onto a person just because they had a family member with a mental illness, that may or may not have been genetic. The general public is far too undereducated about mental illness and there is so little known about existing mental illnesses that making this information public is not in the best interest of the public.

Sincerely,

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