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Eugene OR 97403

Tuesday, April 9, 2013

Mitch Greenlick, Ph.D.
Chairman, Oregon House Health Care Committee
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St. NE H-493
Salem, OR 97301

Re: HB 2093

Dear Chairman Greenlick, Vice Chairs Keny-Guyer, Thompson and Members of the Oregon House Health Care Committee:

I am writing on behalf of the members of JGSWVO to express concern about House Bill 2093 proposed changes to regulations on access to vital records in Oregon. Our state currently has 100-75-50 year waiting periods for birth, marriage and death records, where some states have no waiting periods at all. There seems to be no good reason to make Oregon waiting periods even longer.

Oregon citizens need access to these records. If we are going to improve our own health, we also need information on our grandparent's cause of death. There are genetic issues. There are also diseases that can be prevented by changes in lifestyle. If we know our ancestors cause of death, perhaps we can prevent potential illnesses in our children and ourselves.

In my own genealogy research, I learned that not only did my grandfather and my uncle died of sudden massive heart attacks, but several other males in the extended family did as well. If our family had access to the cause of death sooner, the information might have been used to prevent the same cause of death in males of my generation. Extending waiting periods for vital records or removing cause of death information has potentially harmful effects.

With current progress in genetic testing and the necessary knowledge of family history associated with it, we think the Oregon legislature should be encouraging more access to information, rather than making it more difficult to see ancestors vital records. Therefore, we hope that you will make no changes in the waiting periods for access or the access to cause of death in Oregon vital records.

Sincerely,

Reeva Kimble

Reeva Kimble

President JGSWVO: Jewish Genealogical Society Willamette Valley Oregon

Web site: <http://www.nwfam.com/jgswvo.html>

cc: Tyler Larson