

## Darryl Westlund

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**From:** Darryl Westlund <d.west4@frontier.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 6, 2016 3:32 PM  
**To:** DOA Public Records Board Comments  
**Subject:** Electronic Records

Dear Board Members:

Wisconsin has been, in the past, held up as a state with an open, honest, and clean government. Unfortunately that openness has been under siege during the past few years. I believe such openness is critical in order for the people of Wisconsin to have faith in its government and in those who are elected to govern the state. I ask this question: If those who govern are doing nothing that should be considered "shady" then should they need to limit access to records?. Conversely, the need to keep records closed seems to indicate that perhaps something is being done that is not on the "up-and-up." And, that, speaking personally as a citizen in this state, is not a feeling I'd like to have about those in governing positions.

Public officials are in office to **serve** the public and because of that the public needs to know what its elected and appointed officials are doing in the name of the people. Being in office does not mean that someone has a free rein to do as they wish. Government and public officials have a **responsibility** to the citizens of the state and the open records helps to remind them of their responsibility.

I come back to my opening thought, Wisconsin has had a reputation of having a clean government. Why do things need to be changed? Shouldn't we be defending the good (transparency) instead of opting for secretiveness? What good can come of secretiveness in the world of government? Why should secretiveness and closing records be an option if nothing is being done that is untoward? Why are those who want to close records afraid of openness? Fair questions to ask.

In a democracy transparency is necessary. We **need** to know and we have the **right** to know, as citizens, what is being done in government. Remember the decisions made by people in government affect all of us in the state. We should know the process through which those decisions were made.

Sincerely,  
Kathleen Westlund  
Mosinee, Wisconsin