

## Bill Oemichen

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**From:** Bill Oemichen <Bill.Oemichen@UnitedFCS.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 5, 2016 5:05 PM  
**To:** DOA Public Records Board Comments  
**Cc:** Sen.Erpenbach - LEGIS  
**Subject:** Public Records Board - Request to Rescind Prior Action

Dear Members of the Wisconsin Public Records Board:

I respectfully request you rescind your prior action to limit or eliminate public access to transitory state records through electronic media such as e-mail, Twitter, Facebook, etc.

I served as Administrator of the Wisconsin Division of Trade & Consumer Protection from 1996-2001 during the administration of Governor Tommy G. Thompson and previously served as Assistant and Deputy Minnesota Agriculture Commissioner from 1989 - 1996. I learned during my Wisconsin and Minnesota state service about the importance of open government and the ability of citizens to access state records. My staff and I often received open records requests during my state service, and while the requests could sometimes be considered inconvenient, we -- consistent with our belief in consumer protection -- strongly believed the public had a right to know how our policy and enforcement decisions were made. This open records access is even more important in a legislative process where it is often difficult to determine who or what is behind certain legislation. Given that much of the substantive communication between state officials, and between state officials and lobbyists, is occurring through electronic social media, it is vitally important to maintain the same public records protections for those communications.

Wisconsin has a proud tradition of open government and we are rightly looked upon by other states as a leader in transparent decision-making. Given this, please rescind your prior decision. Thank you for your consideration of my views.

Sincerely,

William L. Oemichen  
W6159 Legler Valley Road  
New Glarus, Wisconsin 53574

Sent from my iPad