

**Julie Lang**

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**From:** Julie Lang <jlang24@wi.rr.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 5, 2016 8:06 PM  
**To:** DOA Public Records Board Comments  
**Cc:** Blessing, Matthew T - WHS; Ferguson, Paul M - DOJ; Naab, Bryan S - LAB; Schmidt, Melissa A - LEGIS; Broady-Rudd, Sandra; Buesing, Carl; Sorce, Peter  
**Subject:** Rescind your action re: transitory records

Dear Public Records Board:

I am writing to request that you immediately rescind your action limiting the public's access to text messages, emails, Facebook posts and other electronic communications by all public employees.

Fair and open government is the bedrock upon which our democracy stands and limiting the public's right to know in regards to certain modes of communications that many of us, including public employees, are using more and more in our everyday lives is to willfully ignore reality itself. In fact, I would go further and state that if you go forward with this action, your board will become a blatant obstacle to a transparent and working democracy.

It needs to be pointed out that no matter which political party is in power at the moment, we the public deserve to have those who are elected and appointed held accountable. It doesn't bode well for transparency when Governor Scott Walker mentions that he "occasionally" transfers messages over from his personal accounts to his official accounts. This lackadaisical approach should not be tolerated in governing but since it is, you need to make sure that your decision does not help cloak corrupt or unethical actions. Let me be clear, your decision to go forward with this action will only exacerbate the lack of respect that should be properly accorded to the public's right to know.

Also, I would argue that the label "transitory records" is a misnomer - it should be called "self-regulating records" because it leaves the decision of the whether a text or an email is important or pertinent enough to save up to the public employee who is the sender or receiver. That's not how it should work. It should be left up to the public to decide if a certain communication is pertinent to an issue and answers are needed.

It is a sad truth but creating a special "safe" class of communications for public employees, one that is not susceptible to public or oversight scrutiny, will invite further abuse and secrecy far more than what the state of Wisconsin is already facing.

"Sunlight is said to be the best of disinfectants."

Thank you,

Julie Lang  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin