

Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: I didn't hear you, I'm sorry. Mr. President, members, let me again state something on this. The Health Committee held hearings. We met with the different officials, the genealogy societies, and we worked out a plan to not allow destruction of these ledgers. They had originally, said you must destroy them. We were worried that they may, in fact, have some valuable information. We didn't want to get rid of them. But notwithstanding that question, if Senator Lamb's people are now looking at those ledgers, they are violating the law. They were never supposed to have access to those ledgers. They were never the official documents on this sort of information. They are not to be open to the public because they are too easily accessed to find out information about other people in other families, and other information that is not your right to know about. These are confidential pieces of information. Now, there is a chance that we can work out arrangements to get access to this information. And through the mails, through telephone calls, whatever, we can try and sit down and work that out. But if you are talking, Senator Eret and Senator Lamb are saying, well, we want that local access, you haven't got it now, or at least you are not supposed to have it now. So these records leaving the county level are only doing what should have been the case a long time ago. So I'd ask you, please, to vote for this amendment and allow us to go forward with the changes that we are proposing through the plan of action. Oh, let me add one last thing. For some of you who are not sure, well, why is there something... is there something on that information that is a problem? What happens is these ledgers can also include information about adoption, maybe illegitimate births, maybe other types of information that just, frankly, is not public record, public information. That is where you get into the problem with individuals having access to them. I mean, these are very confidential pieces of information. These ledgers are only recording devices that they passed through the counties and went on to the state, which was a silly system. Thank goodness Senator Miller got that bill through to stop that wasteful activity. And now we are going to see if we can't find some better way to deal with the problems of access to historical documents. Again, I think we've got most people agreeable to this. But evidently some pockets of resistance to this change are still out there. But I suggest this is the best route to take, and I'd ask your support for this amendment. Then we can support Senator Lamb's resolution.