

*People for Better Pennsylvania Historical Records Access (PaHR-Access)*

## GENEALOGISTS RESEARCHERS FAMILY HISTORIANS

*We are asking for your help in a grassroots effort to have better access to older Pennsylvania state death certificates as well as have them made available online*

We are trying to get the Pennsylvania state death certificates that are at least 50 years old (currently that means from 1906-1959) to become open records and available online similar to how the 15 states have already done. For nearly 30 other states there are extracted data and/or indexes of death records online or at their state archives. Pennsylvania is one of the five most restricted states when it comes to access to state death certificates. We are sure many of you have experienced the frustration of having to provide several pieces of information (including when and where the person died) when quite often the very information you are asked to supply is the very information you are looking for and the very reason for your wanting the death certificate. Probably many of you have either have been told the death certificate couldn't be found or sent the wrong certificate. In general, because of the many burdensome and paradoxical restrictions the public has not able to use these historic records as much as they should be able to. Worst of all these restrictions are true for all Pennsylvania state death certificates regardless of how long ago the person died.

Because the only way this is ever likely to happen we are asking you, including out of state residents, to contact certain Pennsylvania state officials, preferably in writing or in person since it will have the most impact, but at least by phone or email. If you live in Pennsylvania please contact **both your state senator and your state representative** in person, by letter, by phone or at the very least by email. Everyone, including out of state residents, should write, phone or at the very least email **the Governor** and even the Division of Vital Records. Naturally the more letters and other forms of contact that are made and the more people involved the better. This change can only happen with your help.

**Addresses, FAQ, sample letters, forms, links and considerably more information can be found at: [users.rcn.com/timarg/PaHR-Access](http://users.rcn.com/timarg/PaHR-Access) (or Google "PaHR-Access")**

If you have any questions please contact the spokesperson for PaHR-Access:  
Tim Gruber 610-791-9294 or [timarg@rcn.com](mailto:timarg@rcn.com)