

By Mr. Benson of Greenfield, petition of Michael Joseph Connolly, William D. Benson and others for legislation to improve records management practices throughout the Commonwealth. State Administration.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Eighty-Two.

AN ACT IMPROVING RECORDS MANAGEMENT PRACTICES THROUGHOUT THE COMMONWEALTH.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section forty-two of Chapter thirty of the Gener-
2 al Laws is hereby repealed.

1 SECTION 2. Chapter 66 of the General Laws is hereby amend-
2 ed by striking out section 8, as most recently amended by Chapter
3 141 of the Acts of 1974, and inserting in place thereof the following
4 section: —

5 “Section 8. The supervisor of records shall establish and admin-
6 ister for the offices of the commonwealth, counties and municipali-
7 ties, excluding the judicial and legislative branches, a records
8 management program embracing the creation, arrangement, use,
9 security, preservation and disposition of records. The supervisor of
10 records shall establish standards and procedures for the proper
11 management of records and shall establish schedules for the reten-
12 tion of such records. The supervisor of records shall take whatever
13 steps necessary to appraise existing records management practices.
14 Every state, county and municipal office shall cooperate with the
15 supervisor of records in implementing these steps and shall adhere
16 to the records management policies prescribed by the supervisor of
17 records.

18 Every original paper belonging to the files of the commonwealth
19 or of any county or municipality bearing a date earlier than the
20 year eighteen hundred and seventy, every book of registry or
21 records, except books which the supervisor of records determines
22 may be destroyed, every town warrant, every deed to the common-
23 wealth or to any county or municipality, every report of an agent,
24 officer or committee relative to bridges, public ways, sewers or
25 other state, county or municipal interests not required to be re-
26 corded in a book and not so recorded, shall be preserved and safely
27 kept as determined by the supervisor of records. Notwithstanding
28 the foregoing, the register of deeds in any county may, without
29 such written approval, destroy any papers, pertaining to attach-
30 ments or to the dissolution or discharge thereof in the files of his
31 office following the expiration of twenty years after the latest
32 original entry therein or thereon, unless otherwise specifically
33 provided by law, and he may destroy all original instruments left
34 for record and not called within five years after the recording
35 thereof."