



# Pacific Currents

Newsletter of the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration

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Facilities and staff in San Bruno, Laguna Niguel, and Riverside, California  
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## Fiftieth Anniversary of the Freedom of Information Act

This month, we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) into law. The original act will be on display in the National Archives' permanent exhibition "Records of Rights" in the David M. Rubenstein Gallery of the National Archives Museum in Washington, DC, through September 14, 2016.

Today, public access to information about the government is considered a fundamental right. The FOIA is the law that makes that access happen. Recognizing that the records of a democratic government belong to the people, the United States became one of the first nations to open its records to the public on July 4, 1966, when Congress passed the Freedom of Information Act.

Under the FOIA anyone can request access to most Executive Branch records. Federal agencies are also required to proactively release certain records. Disclosure of some or all of the information in a document can be

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California Secretary of State's Office, Old Series Trademark No. 2688, January 2, 1896

## California State Archives Puts Old Trademark Files Online

The California State Archives has announced the online publication of nearly 4,000 digitized California trademark images and applications filed with the State between 1861 and 1900. The project was made possible by a grant by NARA's **National Historical Publications and Records Commission** with assistance from the Friends of the California Archives.

The explosion of population and commerce after the Gold Rush led to California's first-in-the-

nation trademark law which resulted in this collection of product labels and logos registered with the California Secretary of State. Champagne,

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## Records Management Training, July-September 2016

By Course Name (for training by location, see below)

To register go to <https://nara.learn.com/learncenter.asp?id=178413> or email our training registrar at [laguna.workshops@nara.gov](mailto:laguna.workshops@nara.gov)

For more information on our workshops, [go to our training page by clicking here.](#)

### Basic Records Operations (BRO)

August 2, Flagstaff; August 8, San Diego.

**Online:** this class is also presented as an Online Webinar in four weekly sessions of 90 minutes each on:

**August 3, 10, 17, and 24 (at 7:00 a.m. PDT); and**

**September 7, 14, 21, and 28 (at 7:00 a.m. PDT).**

### Electronic Records Management (ERM)

August 3-4, Flagstaff

### Vital Business Information (VBI)

**Online:** September 8, 15, 22, and 29

(at 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., PDT)

### Knowledge Area Classes:

#### Records Management Overview

[\(Knowledge Area 1\)](#)

July 11, Denver

#### Records Scheduling

[\(Knowledge Area 3\)](#)

July 14-15, Denver; August 11-12, San Diego

#### Asset and Risk Management

[\(Knowledge Area 5\)](#)

July 20- 21, Denver; September 14-15, San Diego

#### Creating and Maintaining Agency

**Business Information** [\(Knowledge Area 2\)](#)

July 12-13, Denver; August 9-10, San Diego

#### Records Schedule Implementation

[\(Knowledge Area 4\)](#)

July 18-19, Denver; September 12-13, San Diego

#### Records Management Program

**Development** [\(Knowledge Area 6\)](#)

July 22, Denver; September 16, San Diego

### → → → → RM Training By Location ← ← ← ←

#### Denver (Broomfield), Colorado

Records Management Overview ([KA1](#)), July 11; Creating and Maintaining Agency Business Information ([KA2](#)); July 12-13; Records Scheduling ([KA3](#)), July 14-July 15; Records Schedule Implementation ([KA4](#)), July 18-July 19; Asset and Risk Management ([KA5](#)), July 20- 21; Records Management Program Development ([KA6](#)), July 22.

#### Flagstaff, Arizona

Basic Records Operations ([BRO](#)), August 2; Electronic Records Management ([ERM](#)), August 3-4.

#### San Diego, California

Basic Records Operations ([BRO](#)), August 8, 2016; Creating and Maintaining Agency Business Information ([KA2](#)); August 9-10, 2016; Records Scheduling ([KA3](#)), August 11-12; Records Schedule Implementation ([KA4](#)), September 12-13; Asset and Risk Management ([KA5](#)) September 14-15; Records Management Program Development ([KA6](#)), September 16.

#### Online Webinars

Basic Records Operations ([BRO](#)), August 3, 10, 17, and 24 (at 7:00 a.m. PDT); and September 7, 14, 21, and 28 (at 7:00 a.m. PDT).

Vital Business Information ([VBI](#)), September 8, 15, 22, and 29 (at 11:00 a.m. PDT).

## California Trademark Files Online

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cigars, peaches and patent medicines were affixed with trademarked labels depicting the California landscape, Native Americans, and iconic images of California grizzly bears, gold miners, Minerva, the Capitol dome and colorful produce.

These "Old Series Trademarks" provide a fascinating view into commerce and consumer goods in the Golden State at a time when the industrial revolution and transcontinental railroad brought transformative change and expansive new markets for products from California.

California's ground-breaking Trademark Registration Act of 1863 allowed businesses to register images and labels for any product with the Secretary of State and made it unlawful for others, without consent, to use the same trademarked items to sell similar or counterfeit goods. An 1861 law allowed registration of brands on certain beverage bottles. These trademark laws were enacted nearly 10 years before federal trademark legislation.

The images can be viewed online at:

[www.sos.ca.gov/archives/trademarks](http://www.sos.ca.gov/archives/trademarks)



California Secretary of State's Office, Old Series Trademark No. 1868b, August 22, 1890



California Secretary of State's Office, Old Series Trademark No. 1865b, August 18, 1890

## FOIA is 50 on July 4th

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prohibited, however, if it falls within a series of nine exemptions that protect, among other things, national security, privacy, and trade secrets.

The Federal FOIA Ombudsman's Office, known as the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS), was created within the National Archives in 2007. Under the law, OGIS is required to provide mediation services to resolve FOIA disputes, review agency compliance with FOIA, and

make recommendations to improve the FOIA process.

In the 50 years since the FOIA's passage, amendments to the original law continue to increase public access to paper and electronic documents that illustrate the workings of the government. Use of the FOIA has also increased dramatically since its passage. In the first five years of the law the government received 535 FOIA requests; in 2015, it received more than 713,168 requests.

# Harvey Milk 1978 Letter to President Jimmy Carter

On June 28, 1978, San Francisco Supervisor Harvey Milk wrote to President Jimmy Carter asking for his support in defeating California ballot Proposition 6, which would have banned gays and lesbians from working in the California public schools. The original letter is in the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library in Atlanta, GA.

Harvey Milk was the first openly gay person to be elected to public office in California when he was elected to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors.

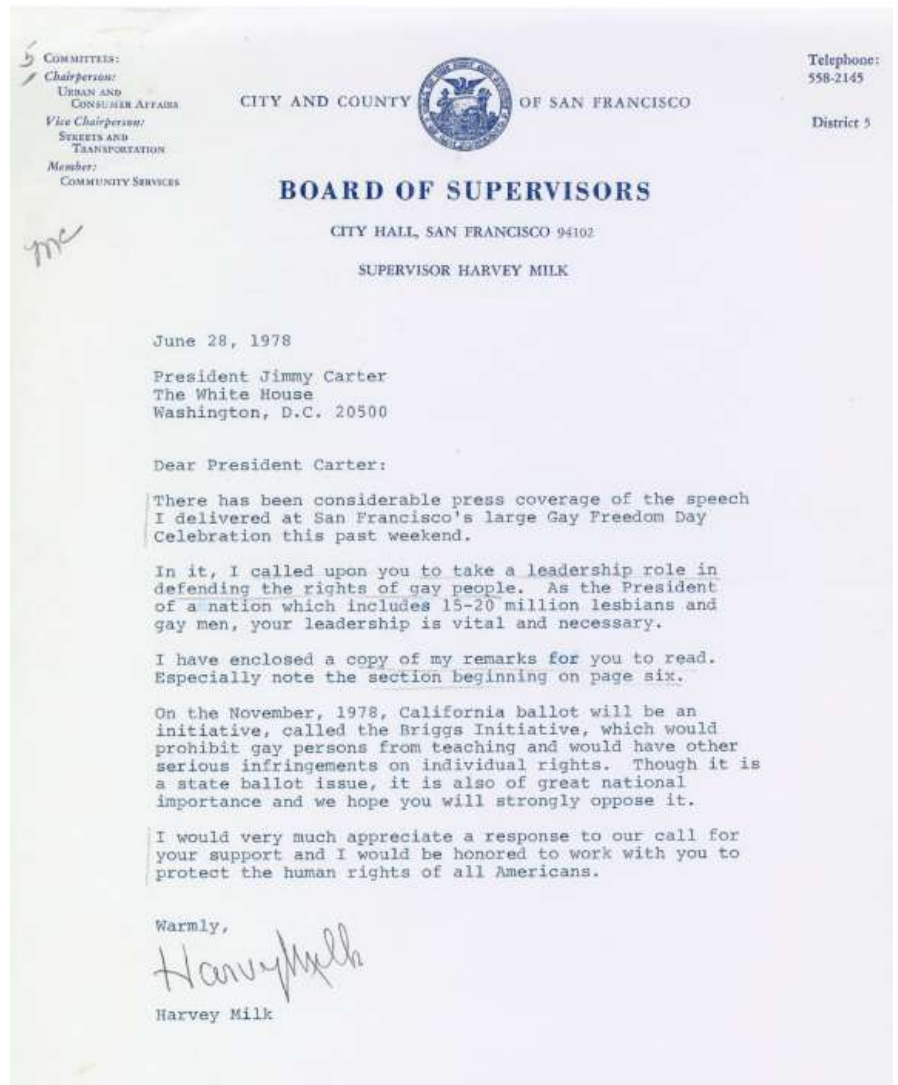
Milk spoke out against Proposition 6 in a speech he delivered at San Francisco's Gay Freedom Day Parade in 1978, which saw a record number of attendees. The speech, subsequently referred to as the "Hope Speech," became instantly famous and was covered throughout the United States.

Milk referenced this speech in his letter to President Carter, saying "In it, I called upon you to take a leadership role in defending the rights of gay people. As the President of a nation which includes 15-20 million lesbians and gay men, your leadership is vital and necessary."

Milk went on to stress the impact Proposition 6 would have on the rights of all citizens.

It is unknown what effect Milk's letter had on President Carter's stance on Proposition 6, although Carter publicly opposed the bill, citing its potential infringement on individual rights.

In that November's election, the proposition was defeated by more than 1 million votes. President Carter's opposition may have played a role in its defeat.



Harvey Milk's letter to President Carter



Harvey Milk at work in San Francisco