



HB 2624 (Syed): The Court Record and Document Accessibility Act

Access to Court Records is Fundamental to Access to the Courts and the Administration of Justice

- It has long been the policy in Illinois that court records should be open and accessible to the public unless the General Assembly or the Illinois Supreme Court determines other public policy reasons override that general policy.
- Over the years, the General Assembly for good reason has determined that limiting access to court records is warranted in some instances, such as for adoption and juvenile records.

Lack of Clarity in Limiting Court Record Access Has Caused Real Problems for Both the Public and the Courts

- The terminology the General Assembly has used in limiting access has not always been clear or consistent with legislative intent, making it hard for court clerks to efficiently administer justice and often unintentionally limiting people from access to court records they need.
- Recent examples include eviction and domestic violence, when the people the General Assembly was trying to protect could not get access to the records they need to assert their legal rights.

HB 2624 Solves this Problem Going Forward by Clarifying Definitions and Standardizing Access to Court Records When There Are Restrictions



- Aligns definitions in the ILCS with Supreme Court Rule 8.
- Clarifies language limiting court record access to align with these definitions consistent with legislative intent.
- Creates standards for access to restricted court files and clarifies what the courts and those allowed access need to do.