

# Summer Study Survey- Citizen

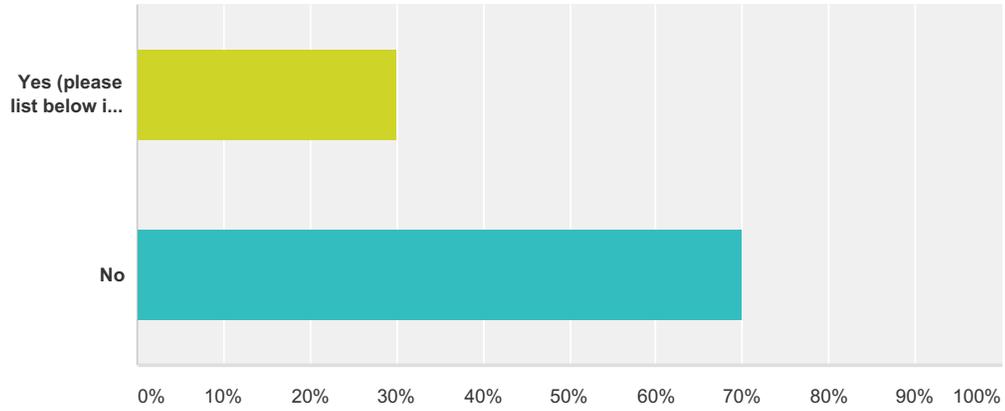
## Q1 Contact Information

Answered: 399 Skipped: 8

Answer Choices	Responses	
Your Name	100.00%	399
Media Entity Name (If Applicable)	15.04%	60
Address	96.99%	387
Address 2	5.51%	22
City	98.25%	392
State	98.75%	394
ZIP/Postal Code	98.75%	394
Country	0.00%	0
Email Address	93.23%	372
Phone Number	83.96%	335

## Q2 Are you a member of an organization or group interested in government records and transparency?

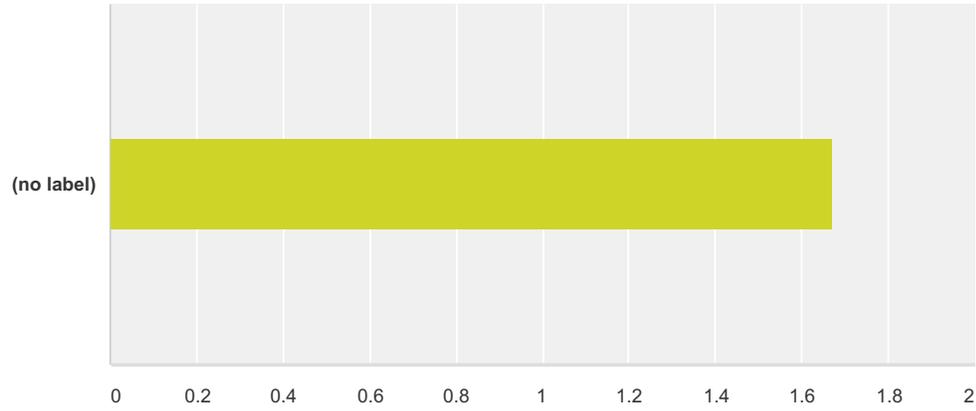
Answered: 398 Skipped: 9



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes (please list below in comment field)	30.15%	120
No	69.85%	278
<b>Total</b>		<b>398</b>

**Q3 Estimate the number of Governmental Entities/Records Custodians to whom you or your organization make requests per month:**

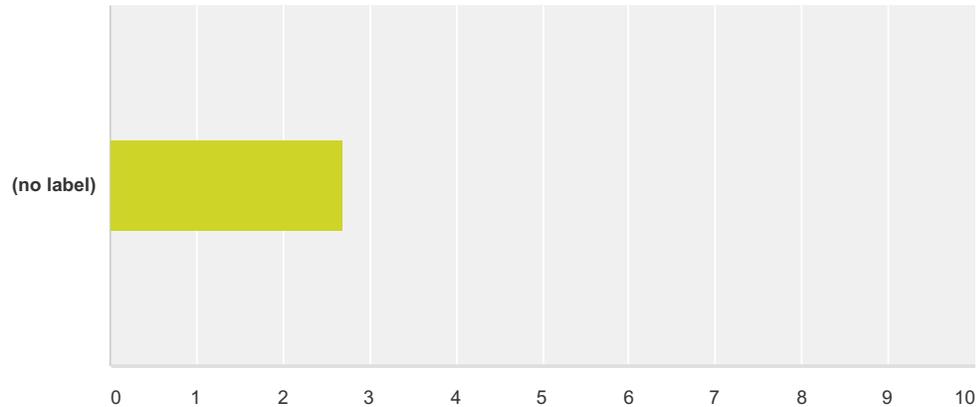
Answered: 365 Skipped: 42



	0-1	2-5	6-10	11-20	21-30	31+	Total	Weighted Average
(no label)	62.19% 227	24.93% 91	6.30% 23	1.64% 6	0.55% 2	4.38% 16	365	1.67

**Q4 Considering the requests made over the last year, estimate the average number of pages per request that were made available for your inspection (count screen views as pages, but list audio and video under additional comments):**

Answered: 363 Skipped: 44



	0	1-5	6-10	11-20	21-50	51+	Total	Weighted Average
(no label)	36.09% 131	22.59% 82	12.12% 44	8.26% 30	6.34% 23	14.60% 53	363	2.70

#	Additional comments	Date
1	Some requests were a page or two. Other requests, such as for Tax Increment Financing documents, might involve 50-75 pages.	9/30/2015 5:51 AM
2	I agree that someone should be charged if they don't pick up their records. How many republicans are running around the state doing that now, so that it will look like that happens with regularity?	9/26/2015 1:38 PM
3	I was denied.	9/25/2015 6:07 PM
4	Didn't request any	9/25/2015 10:06 AM
5	It does not matter how many copies I make. this is about the law.	9/23/2015 8:54 PM
6	I have not requested any records. I think there should not be a charge for these up to a reasonable number of copies.	9/23/2015 3:38 PM
7	Question is difficult to calculate, so the midrange is selected. TPRA defines public records broadly and does not spell out limited procedures for inspecting public records So, every time a reporter accesses a government website, picks up information at a press conference or meeting, gets a copy of a police incident report, or even reads an emailed news release he or she is accessing public records under the Public Records Act. The News Sentinel probably makes 1-2 written public records requests per week. Some are for databases, such as the salaries of all University of Tennessee, City of Knoxville or Knox County employees. Accessed per screen view, their pages would equal the number of employees and run into the many thousands. A typical written records request, such as a request for a copy of a contract or a personnel file, however, would usually produce 3-15 pages. A verbal request, such as a police reporter picking up copies of an incident report or a city hall reporter getting copies of an agenda, would typically produce 2-5 pages. The verbal public records requests would be made several times a day as reporters worked their beats. We probably request 1 or 2 video or audio files per month, and these often require a written request, although some videos, such as of legislative, city council and school board meetings, are readable accessible on government websites and can be requested by clicking a mouse.	9/21/2015 5:42 PM
8	I made no requests over the last year	9/21/2015 1:46 PM

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9	I have not yet requested any records.	9/21/2015 9:47 AM
10	requested 60 page scans by email (no more than one time in 3 months, other times visited office	9/20/2015 5:54 PM
11	My one major open records request, from the TN Lottery in 2006, yielded thousands of pages of emails, all printed out, even though we had made a specific request about a personnel action. (Whitehouse et al. v. TN Lottery, Davidson Chancery, 2006) The pile of printed emails included private things we never sought to see and never reported, as state workers had done a lot of personal business on their accounts.	9/19/2015 1:33 PM
12	Not applicable	9/19/2015 10:40 AM
13	organization should not matter	9/17/2015 3:35 PM
14	Dealing with the State agencies has been great. Locals are a lot worse, the smaller the worse.	9/17/2015 11:36 AM
15	We access Public Records for pre-employment purposes	9/17/2015 11:33 AM
16	Audio and video	9/17/2015 6:54 AM
17	My requests are for copies not inspection	9/16/2015 2:12 PM
18	I will comment on beliefs, not historical activity	9/16/2015 12:43 PM
19	City of Hendersonville uses tactics such as including more information or pages that were not requested to make it more difficult to find and review the information requested. This puts a burden on office staff and is a waste of time and tax dollars. Additionally, I have had to make multiple requests to obtain the data I was seeking. To date and after numerous requests, I, along with other elected officials (aldermen), still cannot get records that provide an accounting of an \$18 million TIF. When engaging with cities such as Franklin, Mt Juliet, White House, and Brentwood, I have been able to receive PDFs of documents requested (such as travel policies) immediately during a phone call. I did not have to complete a form or wait 7 days to even get a response. This is how it should be. Hendersonville makes public record requesting difficult and cumbersome.	9/16/2015 12:12 AM
20	Just because I did not make any request this past year does not mean that I have not made requests in the past or that I will not make requests in the future. I think this should remain a free right that a citizen has.	9/14/2015 2:40 PM
21	Court records and online information	9/9/2015 10:20 AM
22	I haven't made any requests, but the option needs to remain, and at no cost. All else will kill transparency, and discriminate against those who cannot afford to pay for viewing. We need to maintain Sunshine in this state!	9/7/2015 6:35 PM
23	I am a retired school librarian	9/7/2015 4:20 PM
24	Most requests were made on Government internet sites. The Town of Pegram has a publicly funded site but replied to none of my e-mails, one of which was a question about a paving contract/bid regarding the street on which I live. My first notice was the day the trucks and paving crew from 4-square Paving Company which organization also refused a reply or ignored. There is something very wrong in some State political sub-divisions and their refusal to make all public records public.	9/7/2015 1:15 PM
25	It is very hard to estimate this. There are some months I don't make any records requests, but it is important to be able to when a need arises, and to have unlimited access to public records.	9/7/2015 10:06 AM
26	video of county commission meeting	9/6/2015 4:26 PM
27	I didn't ask for any at this time but am interested in genealogy which at some point I will want to look at document	9/5/2015 2:46 PM
28	Agency refused written response to request.	9/5/2015 8:13 AM
29	This is on a National basis. Our group has chapters in many states.	9/4/2015 11:20 PM
30	The School Board refused to make available!	9/4/2015 9:32 PM
31	The records I got were incomplete, still are months later	9/4/2015 5:03 PM
32	Some years have been closer to 50 or above	9/4/2015 11:35 AM
33	journalism	9/3/2015 10:17 AM
34	It does not matter how many records I want to see. Public records should be easily accessible at no cost whatsoever. Paying for it would be another sales tax. (another TEA Party plot!!!)	9/3/2015 9:22 AM
35	Requested to view records electronically after concerning behavior witnessed by employees of a publicly funded institution	9/3/2015 9:19 AM
36	n/a	9/3/2015 7:32 AM
37	We need to promote democracy. Open, free and available public records are part of this.	9/3/2015 6:39 AM

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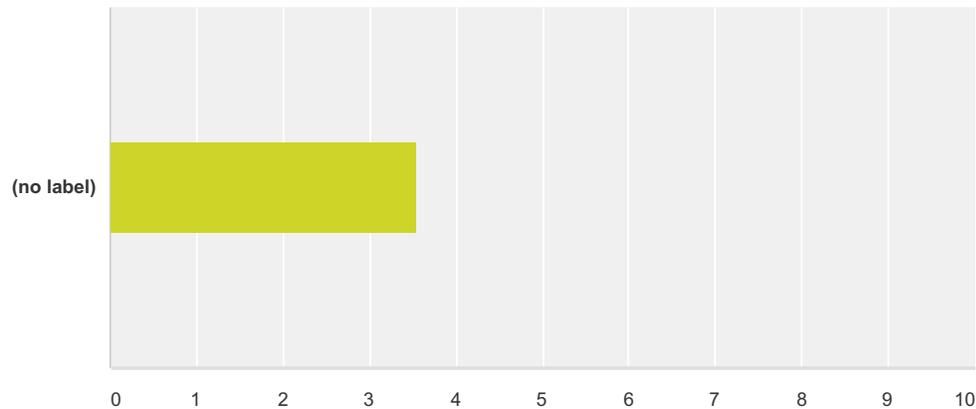
38	Dash Cam Videos	9/3/2015 5:09 AM
39	City of White House Corrupt	9/2/2015 10:29 PM
40	Retired. N/A	9/2/2015 9:42 PM
41	Records are never complete. Rarely get requested records	9/2/2015 6:36 PM
42	In 2012 and 2013 I requested a high volume of Public Records. Found most things I needed and was charged for copies made	9/2/2015 5:15 PM
43	I requested for review only and was told a computer would be made available for my review. Instead the district chose to print off thousands of unnecessary copies many of which were the exact same document copy multiple times. Important documents were buried deep in the middle of stacks of repeat copies. Many documents I know to exist based on correspondence in my possession we're never produced.	9/2/2015 4:51 PM
44	Frequently, we get a "letter" stating that its going to cost money for the records. We respond stating we want to view and designate for copying. Frequently, there is no agency response	9/2/2015 4:26 PM
45	Q3 and 4 not applicable to me; retired so no requests in "last year" but many requests during my working years	9/2/2015 12:54 PM
46	these are mainly local requests	9/1/2015 11:34 AM
47	Deed Searches	8/31/2015 8:19 PM
48	I usually make my requests in person	8/30/2015 11:55 PM
49	Charging is a tax,not free access.	8/30/2015 8:43 PM
50	Many Tennessee citizenns cannot afford living expenses, school lunches, computers, health or life insurance, they certainly cannot afford this.	8/30/2015 11:10 AM
51	family genealogist who views many records at local courthouses as well as online.	8/30/2015 7:51 AM
52	As a BOE member I make requests to gain knowledge about the numerous issues and policies that come before the Board. To make educated decisions concerning the school system, public records must be easily attainable. Time is of the essence sometime.	8/26/2015 11:33 PM
53	Most of my requests are satisfied without my invoking law and all have been answered in some manner, and thus far without charge.	8/26/2015 9:30 AM
54	I'm concerned about the idea of charging for such service.	8/26/2015 9:12 AM
55	Not Applicable for me personally. I have not requested records	8/25/2015 11:52 AM
56	I wish to protect the freedom of information for all, especially the poor. Money charged for inspection is no different than charging people to vote.	8/21/2015 5:12 PM
57	N/A	8/20/2015 6:56 PM
58	only made one request to inspect in last 12 months	8/20/2015 12:02 PM
59	Ive never made a request but to start economically limiting the ability of the voters to see the "public" documents is wrong.	8/20/2015 7:30 AM
60	It depends on the type of records I am researching.	8/17/2015 8:51 AM
61	Visited in person	8/15/2015 12:23 PM
62	100+	8/15/2015 12:28 AM
63	Only online requests about property owners at hamiltontn.gov	8/14/2015 8:48 PM
64	The number depend on the type of public record we are seeking	8/14/2015 2:06 PM
65	Are you kidding? Charging for public records? If there is a charge, they are no longer public.	8/14/2015 12:26 PM
66	do not request many records	8/14/2015 12:00 PM
67	N/A	8/14/2015 8:24 AM
68	We pay taxes for collection and maintenance of public records. NO additional charge should be imposed to view the records.	8/14/2015 7:31 AM
69	County receives multiple request which adversely impacts operation of government. Information is otherwise available and identifies information about employees which is not available re private employees though the government expenditures are available in budget info. There a way to be open and protect privacy	8/14/2015 6:13 AM

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70	I review primarily environmental files and property deeds.	8/14/2015 5:59 AM
71	Should be no charge for public records other than .15 per copy as set	8/14/2015 5:15 AM
72	Are we counting info on internet or walk in to gov't offices ?	8/14/2015 1:00 AM
73	Paid for all copies I ask for after review	8/13/2015 11:59 AM
74	I'm retired, so don't make requests now.	8/13/2015 10:42 AM
75	your category is way too broad. I (and many others) do historical research which normally involves looking at the older records available at the courthouse.	8/12/2015 8:43 PM
76	Copies should be paid for, but just looking at the records should be free.	8/12/2015 6:17 PM
77	We usually try to make requests electronically.	8/12/2015 5:02 PM
78	News outlets allow public information the average person may not be aware of to be presented to the masses.	8/12/2015 12:03 PM

**Q5 Considering custodial response time to requests made over the last year, estimate the percentage of time you or your organization received a response (whether access, copies, denial or production letter) within the seven business day time period:**

Answered: 338 Skipped: 69



	0%	1-25%	26-50%	51-75%	76+%	Total	Weighted Average
(no label)	39.64%	16.86%	6.51%	8.28%	28.70%	338	3.55
	134	57	22	28	97		

#	Additional comments	Date
1	There are occasions when a 7-day letter is sent but the documents could have been provided instead. There are records custodians who dislike certain citizens and purposely delay filling a request and instead send a letter with a future date.	9/30/2015 5:51 AM
2	Closing records is fascism	9/26/2015 1:38 PM
3	Not sure.never wanted to help very rude	9/25/2015 6:07 PM
4	Response time varies widely.	9/24/2015 2:47 PM
5	Response within seven business days is required by law and fewer than a quarter of the government agencies we deal with are unaware of the law or deliberately violate it.	9/21/2015 5:42 PM
6	I made no requests over the last year	9/21/2015 1:46 PM
7	n/a	9/21/2015 9:47 AM
8	does not apply	9/21/2015 8:47 AM
9	responsiveness from the EFOs (TDEC environmental field offices across the state has been good	9/20/2015 5:54 PM
10	Not applicable	9/20/2015 10:48 AM
11	Not applicable	9/19/2015 10:40 AM
12	Our requests are sent to vendors who use the public terminals. If full information is available on the screen, no clerk assistance is required.	9/17/2015 11:33 AM
13	I get a response in 7 days and copies in another 15	9/16/2015 2:12 PM
14	Response time was reasonable	9/16/2015 6:58 AM

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15	City of Hendersonville will make you wait the full 7 days before responding even if you are requesting to see 2 pages of information that can easily get pulled from a file.	9/16/2015 12:12 AM
16	Received partial responses and had to keep trying	9/14/2015 6:28 PM
17	N/A - mostly view online	9/14/2015 4:13 PM
18	don't know	9/11/2015 11:22 AM
19	I usually receive a response within 7 days, but it's almost always an explanation of why I won't be getting actual records access within 7 days, and about 50-70 percent of the time I am not given an estimated production time within 7 days.	9/9/2015 11:11 AM
20	Not applicable	9/9/2015 10:47 AM
21	Up to now, very open	9/9/2015 10:20 AM
22	All of my request are for online records to the above is not relevent.	9/8/2015 7:56 AM
23	Again, I have not made a request, so you should have provided a "N/A" as an optional answer.	9/7/2015 6:35 PM
24	Some record keepers are ignoring their responsibility and are NOT following required statutes based solely on their arbitrary decisions.	9/7/2015 1:15 PM
25	n/a at this time	9/5/2015 2:46 PM
26	Agency refused written response to request and offered other records in lieu of request.	9/5/2015 8:13 AM
27	Most of I my records access occurs in court houses.	9/4/2015 6:02 PM
28	I still have requests from years earlier that haven't been complied with	9/4/2015 5:03 PM
29	sometimes the correct document seems unavailbel	9/4/2015 11:35 AM
30	For most of the Open Records I've filed, I typically get a letter asking for more time. Most request take between 2 to 9 months-- or more.	9/3/2015 10:38 AM
31	I did not request any records requiring the custodial help	9/3/2015 9:22 AM
32	Requested to review & was repeatedly asked to drop request. Despite requesting electronic review, the documents still took almost 4 weeks to complete. I've also witnessed other requests & retaliation of public institutions.	9/3/2015 9:19 AM
33	n/a	9/3/2015 7:32 AM
34	Made me file lawsuits to obtain videos or claim they dont have.	9/3/2015 5:09 AM
35	all requests were for public records and were immediately copied and paid for	9/3/2015 3:25 AM
36	Retired N/A	9/2/2015 9:42 PM
37	Tennessee records custodians tend to have as the default position to decline as many requests as possible. They game the system. Responses are not generally timely, acurate, or appropriate. They hide behind the law which bars damages and delay, delay, delay.	9/2/2015 7:03 PM
38	To view records in algoid tn. Time ranges from two weeks to months	9/2/2015 6:36 PM
39	Wilson County routinely delays. It's almost like a written rule for them. Sharon Lackey and Sondra Dowdy being exceptions.	9/2/2015 6:13 PM
40	Records were made accessible later than 7 days in many requests. Repeated inquiry to access had to be sent. The officials denied that they were late and other excuses. They even mentioned that I was hard to work with only because I kept asking them to view the requested documents and I kept a very thorough system of certifying time and date and what was provided and what was still missing.	9/2/2015 5:15 PM
41	The request to review documents on my own family was never completely fulfilled.	9/2/2015 4:51 PM
42	retired during last year -- Not Applicable	9/2/2015 12:54 PM
43	I only had one during that time frame, but expect more upcoming	9/2/2015 1:42 AM
44	Memphis Area Transit Authority needs a new records custodian	9/1/2015 12:37 PM
45	If in person, 100%. I by Email or mail somewhat lower.	8/30/2015 11:55 PM
46	on site record review	8/30/2015 4:06 AM

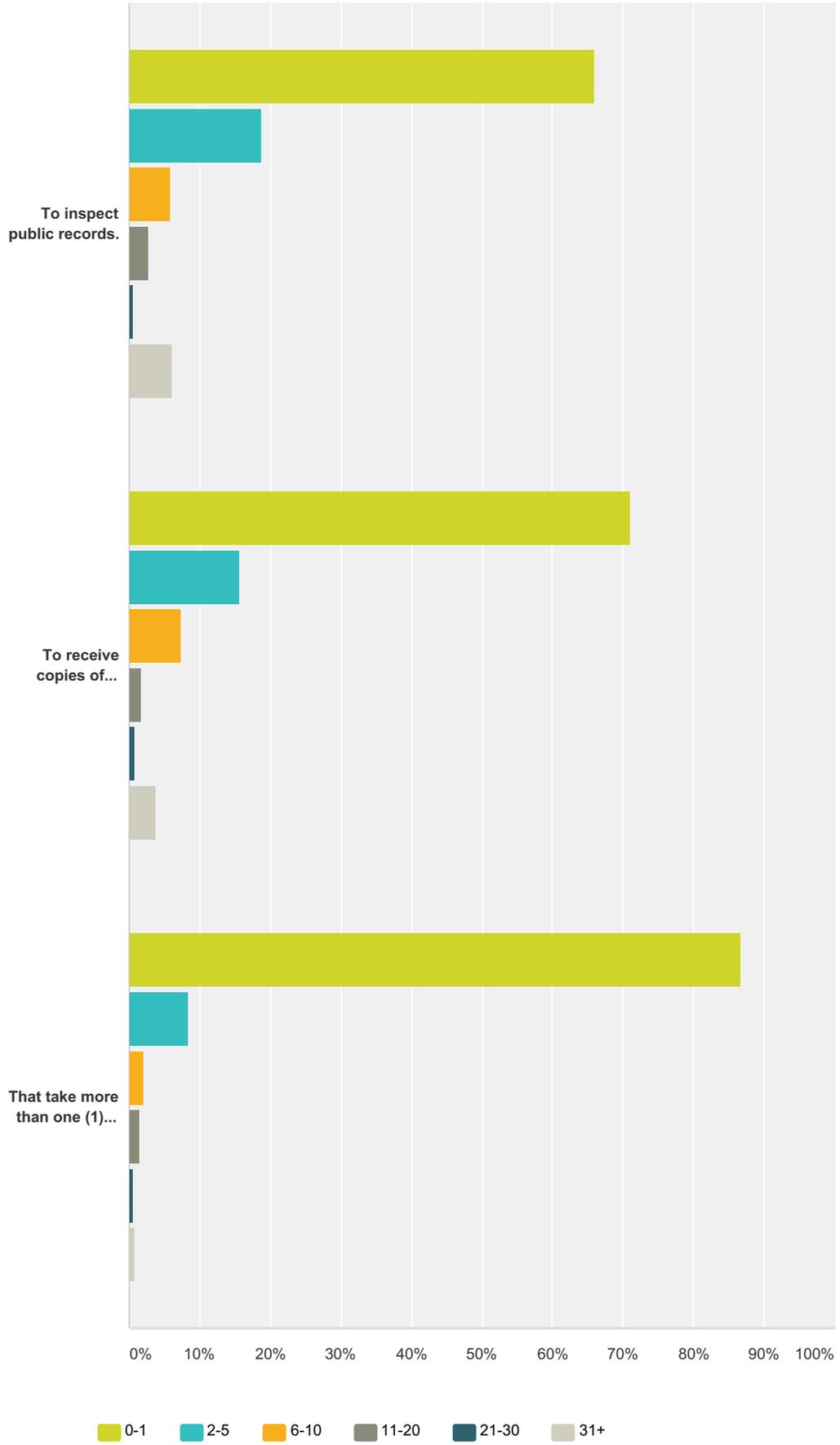
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47	Seven business days does not accomodate board members who receive their monthly board packet only 5 business days before a meeting. The decisions that have to be made within that 5 business day time period isn't enough time to ask and get the needed information to make informed decisions before a board meeting if the Director chooses to make you wait the full seven days. f the Director wants to wait 7 days to get the information to a board member.	8/26/2015 11:33 PM
48	Not applicible for me personally.	8/25/2015 11:52 AM
49	I do not know if our chairman has made any requests.	8/21/2015 5:12 PM
50	N/A	8/20/2015 6:56 PM
51	only made one request to inspect in last 12 months, others were for copies	8/20/2015 12:02 PM
52	Tax payers already own the records; there should be no charge for digital copies.	8/17/2015 9:10 AM
53	Most county courts I have dealt with have responded quickly, plus various US National Archives offices.	8/17/2015 8:51 AM
54	always	8/15/2015 12:23 PM
55	NA	8/14/2015 9:17 PM
56	Again, only interested in public record information available online, i.e. court, property, taxes, marriage records. These do not need to go behind a "paywall". Sorry, it's not clear from what's being explained to us "regular" citizens. And it's a really unclear question.	8/14/2015 8:48 PM
57	No requests made	8/14/2015 4:00 PM
58	Response time here means acknowledgement of request; rarely are records made available within 7 days.	8/14/2015 2:42 PM
59	ok	8/14/2015 10:56 AM
60	N/A	8/14/2015 8:24 AM
61	I have not had any problems.	8/14/2015 1:00 AM
62	does not apply, but if changes are made, getting informational for historical purposes would become impossible	8/12/2015 8:43 PM
63	If in electronic format, it is usually immediate.	8/12/2015 5:02 PM
64	Almost always the same day.	8/12/2015 2:34 PM
65	The majority of requests are not answered in time. You must followup and followup often to get an answer.	8/12/2015 1:52 PM
66	Of all the police department, sheriff's departments, city and county government offices we deal with, only one does not readily provide immediate access to records. Therefore, we typically do not have to make a formal request.	8/12/2015 12:22 PM

**Q6 Estimate the number of requests per month that you or your organization make:**

Answered: 367 Skipped: 40

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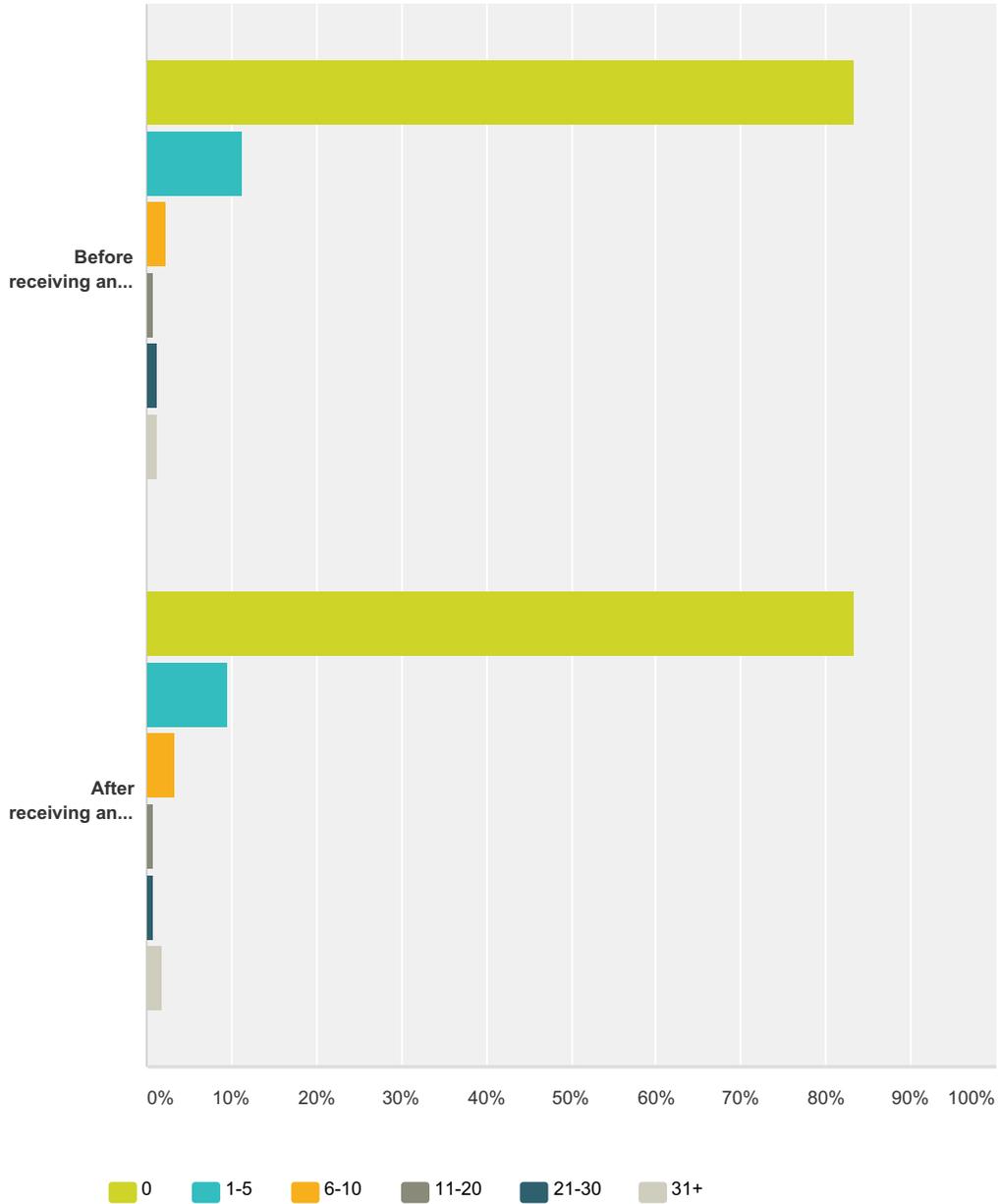


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	<b>0-1</b>	<b>2-5</b>	<b>6-10</b>	<b>11-20</b>	<b>21-30</b>	<b>31+</b>	<b>Total</b>
To inspect public records.	<b>65.93%</b> 238	<b>18.84%</b> 68	<b>5.82%</b> 21	<b>2.77%</b> 10	<b>0.55%</b> 2	<b>6.09%</b> 22	361
To receive copies of records.	<b>70.89%</b> 246	<b>15.56%</b> 54	<b>7.20%</b> 25	<b>1.73%</b> 6	<b>0.86%</b> 3	<b>3.75%</b> 13	347
That take more than one (1) hour to prepare, whether for inspection or duplication.	<b>86.59%</b> 297	<b>8.45%</b> 29	<b>2.04%</b> 7	<b>1.46%</b> 5	<b>0.58%</b> 2	<b>0.87%</b> 3	343

**Q7 Estimate the number of requests for copies that you or your organization made last year that were changed to requests for inspection:**

Answered: 347 Skipped: 60



	0	1-5	6-10	11-20	21-30	31+	Total
Before receiving an estimate of the cost of copies.	83.24% 288	11.27% 39	2.31% 8	0.87% 3	1.16% 4	1.16% 4	346
After receiving an estimate of the cost of copies.	83.28% 269	9.60% 31	3.41% 11	0.93% 3	0.93% 3	1.86% 6	323

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**Q8 Please provide specific examples of when a request for copies of public records was changed to a request for inspection of the records.**

Answered: 109 Skipped: 298

#	Responses	Date
1	N/A	9/30/2015 5:51 AM
2	None	9/28/2015 8:39 AM
3	I did not save the estimated cost for copies. It was over \$100. I spent about \$5, maybe less, on copies after searching through the records myself.	9/24/2015 2:47 PM
4	na	9/23/2015 3:38 PM
5	None	9/22/2015 6:34 AM
6	Never	9/22/2015 6:22 AM
7	Our standard request letter always is to inspect. We never request copies first then switch to inspection. We request to inspect first then seek copies as necessary, if we are dealing with formal written requests. As I have indicated above, the overwhelming majority of our requests are informal, verbal requests or computer-accessed requests, such as accessing the county's GIS system, school district website, etc.	9/21/2015 5:42 PM
8	I have only requested pdf scans to represent copies - or I have visited the office and made the scans on my own machine	9/20/2015 5:54 PM
9	Asked for a copy of a T-Dot file. It turned out the file was extremely large. So I looked through the file and found the few items i needed and copies were made. Saving me and the facilitator of the record time.	9/20/2015 5:24 PM
10	na	9/20/2015 11:27 AM
11	Not applicable	9/19/2015 10:40 AM
12	N/A	9/18/2015 10:03 AM
13	It typically involves requests using keyword searches of emails, minutes, or other records that are likely to return several copies of the same record. When I receive duplicates, I only pay for one and "inspect" the others.	9/18/2015 6:18 AM
14	Na	9/17/2015 3:36 PM
15	NA	9/17/2015 11:36 AM
16	Since our company provides pre-employment background screenings on prospective new hires, we must get a printed copy if the viewable record does not provide the full sentencing information. A hiring decision can only be made by the client once full information is available.	9/17/2015 11:33 AM
17	n/a	9/17/2015 11:03 AM
18	General Sessions Court proceedings	9/17/2015 10:41 AM
19	Circuit court case files in Blount County cannot be checked out to be copied.	9/17/2015 10:02 AM
20	court records	9/17/2015 12:37 AM
21	I was unsure how much material would be produced when I asked for lease documentation for the general aviation lease. I asked for inspection not knowing what the cost might be for copies.	9/16/2015 2:12 PM
22	none	9/16/2015 11:24 AM
23	None.	9/16/2015 6:58 AM
24	I typically make requests to review and inspect based on bad experiences in dealing with the city of Hendersonville, which loads up documents that do not even pertain to the original request and leave you with a sizable bill for "labor". Such tactics are used to drive up costs to obtain records that deter people from making public record requests and knowing how their tax dollars are spent. I may ask for copies when I am certain of the exact number of pages for a specific request or to make a CD copy of a BOMA meeting.	9/16/2015 12:12 AM

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25	n/a	9/15/2015 9:34 AM
26	Most of the time, I make notes of the information I need.	9/14/2015 11:11 PM
27	n/a	9/14/2015 7:47 PM
28	don't know	9/11/2015 11:22 AM
29	N/A	9/11/2015 5:48 AM
30	I have requested countless time to view the minutes to a meeting held by our EMS committee in October 2014. I have requested several times and the mayor and EMS committee refuse to provide anything. no reason for denial. No copies. Nothing!	9/10/2015 1:59 PM
31	When I initially requested the school records, I did not know there was a charge for copies. I then changed my request.	9/10/2015 9:57 AM
32	I often request inspection first, with the right to request copies afterward. I don't start out requesting copies in most cases.	9/9/2015 11:11 AM
33	Usually marriage certificates, birth or death certificates, and such for genealogical research. Occasionally land deeds and similar documents for library patrons in legal circumstances or doing genealogy.	9/9/2015 9:38 AM
34	N/A	9/8/2015 7:56 AM
35	Not applicable to me.	9/7/2015 6:35 PM
36	Only 1 request was made for a copy of the Second South Cheatham water line installation on my street. Tennessee Department of Environment Water Quality confirmed that my line was cast iron and not asbestos concrete as represented by the water department in an effort to get natural gas piping to my home.	9/7/2015 1:15 PM
37	none	9/7/2015 8:56 AM
38	N/A	9/7/2015 7:47 AM
39	If public records are available through digital review the printing fee issue is born by the requester. Citizens should have access to view records without fees. Fees discourage participation in government.	9/6/2015 10:55 AM
40	n/a at this time	9/5/2015 2:46 PM
41	None	9/5/2015 8:13 AM
42	I always filed as a request to inspect/review! School Board refused even after TN Comptroller informed them to do so! They still refused!	9/4/2015 9:32 PM
43	n/a	9/4/2015 6:02 PM
44	I automatically ask for a request for inspection, since the city always tries to convert my request into a hassle involving large fees for records that either aren't what I'm looking for, or are incomplete.	9/4/2015 5:03 PM
45	When denied copy of minutes and financial report of 501c3 unless pay \$1.00 page.	9/4/2015 2:46 PM
46	NA	9/4/2015 11:35 AM
47	So far, N/A.	9/4/2015 2:45 AM
48	Was charged the hourly rate for an in-house attorney, rather than the hourly rate of the least expensive person capable of fulfilling the request.	9/3/2015 3:50 PM
49	The Shelby County School District charged me over \$3,000 in labor cost for providing copies of a list of outside council the district has retained over the last 5 years. With the use of the "inspection" language in the law, I was able to view the records. But the district still charged me the outrageous amount if I wanted to make copies of those records.	9/3/2015 10:38 AM
50	I was repeatedly asked & pressured to drop my request.	9/3/2015 9:19 AM
51	N/A	9/3/2015 8:30 AM
52	n/a	9/3/2015 7:32 AM
53	I have only inspected records but plan to get copies in the future	9/3/2015 6:39 AM
54	They always refuse inspection and make me file lawsuit for records. or claim files they do not have records.	9/3/2015 5:09 AM
55	City of White House extensive records for Mayor Arnold and hidden agendas with developers etc that mysteriously disappeared.	9/2/2015 10:29 PM
56	It is my practice to always request inspection first. Then I can choose which, if any, pages to have copied.	9/2/2015 7:03 PM

## Summer Study Survey- Citizen

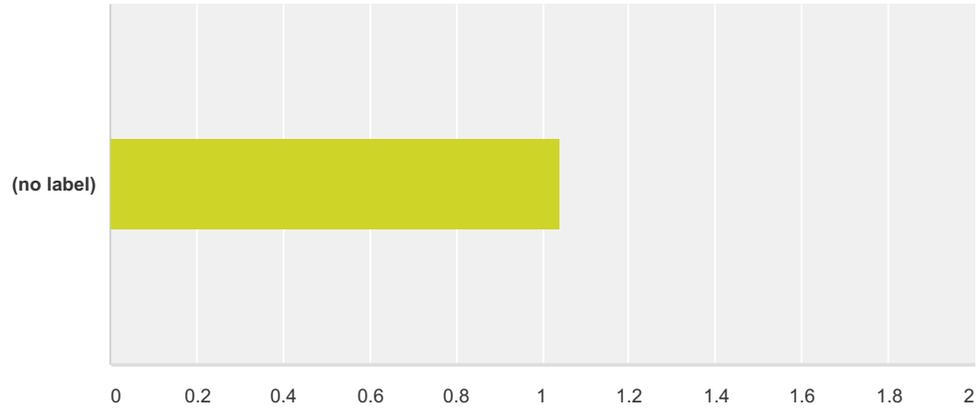
57	Oh, when Knox MPC wanted to charge me \$5k for copies of emails? Honey, please.	9/2/2015 6:37 PM
58	Never . After paying the city over \$2000 in coping fees we now ask to view the records . Saves alo of money	9/2/2015 6:36 PM
59	Mayor Carroll Carman of Trousdale County assserted I would have to pay in full to inspect records an amount he could not determine. Bill Scruggs, Road Superintendant responses similar to Mayor Carman. Ibid for other Trousdale County officials.	9/2/2015 6:28 PM
60	We inspected copies of contracts of hired pest control and lawn care companies and also reports of the yearly inspections of the Health Department and most cases were not applicable so I refrained from having everything copied.	9/2/2015 5:15 PM
61	Although they had not yet attempted to make an exact count, on 1 occasion I did modify my request exclude any documents not specifically related to my family. This included lists of schools my children never attended. However, I received hundreds if not thousands of unrelated documents anyway.	9/2/2015 4:51 PM
62	In a child custody/divorce court case.	9/2/2015 4:27 PM
63	We have repeatedly requested records to back up fiscal notes to legislation. Seldom is the response timely (sometimes even after adjournment). Frequently, the response is that the agency is going to have to invest significant research time. We received at least one cost estimate of over \$10,000 for records related to a fiscal note.	9/2/2015 4:26 PM
64	review of real estate records for Poplar Springs landfill.	9/2/2015 4:04 PM
65	none	9/2/2015 3:11 PM
66	Not Applicable to retired citizen	9/2/2015 12:54 PM
67	police personel files, IAB records	9/1/2015 11:34 AM
68	Individual could not afford cost for copies, went away empty handed and not served.	8/30/2015 11:10 AM
69	not applicable	8/25/2015 6:09 PM
70	none	8/24/2015 5:58 PM
71	n/a	8/24/2015 10:17 AM
72	Shelby county school system	8/23/2015 10:46 AM
73	I saw this in the newspaper a few weeks ago. I feel it is unconstitutional, and an attempt to keep public documents in limited preventative access to the people.	8/21/2015 5:12 PM
74	I have requested nothing recently, but want to know records are available to me when I do want to see one.	8/20/2015 5:40 AM
75	When a member made a road trip to location to personally make inspection	8/19/2015 8:44 AM
76	None	8/18/2015 1:19 PM
77	N/A	8/17/2015 2:03 PM
78	I made a request for copies of emails between an elected official and a county employee. The request resulted in, what would have been a \$5,000 charge due to the amount of copies. After being allowed to inspect the results, I was able to narrow down the reequested copies to about \$50.	8/17/2015 10:20 AM
79	In most cases, my requests require access to an index record first, so I know how to narrow my request to specific pages. I do not live in Tennessee, so I rely on the local county court (or state archives) to send me information on available records first before I know which records I will need to copy.	8/17/2015 8:51 AM
80	Na	8/17/2015 7:00 AM
81	No request were made	8/15/2015 8:37 AM
82	payment was discriminated against as the agency refused cash payment. Demanded other form of payment . WWTA Hamilton County was agency	8/15/2015 12:28 AM
83	na	8/14/2015 9:17 PM
84	None. Found my information needed online at hamiltontn.gov.	8/14/2015 8:48 PM
85	N/A	8/14/2015 8:13 PM
86	Mostly court, law enforcement reports and personnel files.	8/14/2015 2:06 PM
87	Discover on inspection that record did not pertain to need	8/14/2015 11:17 AM
88	emails during a specific time period..	8/14/2015 10:56 AM

## Summer Study Survey- Citizen

89	N/A	8/14/2015 10:13 AM
90	Requests are often for blueprints associated with requirements for stormwater prevention plans from developers.	8/14/2015 8:05 AM
91	n/a	8/14/2015 7:46 AM
92	n/a	8/14/2015 1:00 AM
93	Not applicable in my case	8/13/2015 3:18 PM
94	Information and documents were not what was ask for - mostly junk papers that did not have any thing pertaining to what was ask for in the request	8/13/2015 11:59 AM
95	Not applicable	8/13/2015 11:01 AM
96	N/A	8/13/2015 10:45 AM
97	N/a	8/13/2015 10:42 AM
98	I have always asked for inspection prior to asking for copies if I am uncertain as to whether the responsive documents will be too costly. Further, I always ask for digital copies. For example, I once requested records from MTA thinking I had a narrow enough request, but they said that copies of the records would cost several thousand dollars because of the number of pages. (In that instance, I requested a quote before production of the records to limit my costs.) I imagine you are attempting to imply that the government has made copies of documents and then had to throw them away because the citizen did not want to pay for them. What difference would it make if you would just produce them electronically?	8/13/2015 10:18 AM
99	n/a	8/13/2015 9:37 AM
100	When the governmental entity came back and said it would cost over \$1,000 to copy the records.	8/13/2015 9:17 AM
101	n/a	8/13/2015 9:08 AM
102	None	8/13/2015 6:46 AM
103	I never request copies but rather only request to inspect and then scan them with my own equipment.	8/12/2015 7:54 PM
104	NA	8/12/2015 5:56 PM
105	Generally we have no problem/charge when records are electronic.	8/12/2015 5:02 PM
106	na	8/12/2015 2:19 PM
107	It got to the point where it was becoming cost prohibitive.	8/12/2015 1:20 PM
108	We've frequently requested records from the Department of Human Services Child Care Licensing Division. Many of the records had to be redacted, then copied and even that price was outrageous. It was cheaper to scan the most pertinent documents.	8/12/2015 12:58 PM
109	Several years ago, the Jefferson City Police Department records clerk stopped allowing us access to routinely inspect records, and instead began printing out records for us. We never requested this, but were told this was the only way we could see the records. We objected to this, but never could get anywhere with the police chief. However, recently this same clerk told us we would have to begin paying for the printouts (that we never requested). The department says their computer system does not allow viewing of reports at a computer terminal by the public. We have reached a temporary solution with the recently-named new chief, after we reminded him that we were just asking to inspect records, not obtain copies of them. They are no longer threatening to charge us for copies.	8/12/2015 12:22 PM

**Q9 Estimate the number of times last year that you or your organization failed to inspect or to pick up copies after making a records request:**

Answered: 351 Skipped: 56



	0	1-5	6-10	11-20	21-30	31+	Total	Weighted Average
(no label)	96.01% 337	3.99% 14	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	351	1.04

Summer Study Survey- Citizen

**Q10 Please provide specific examples of when you or your organization did not inspect or pick up copies. Explain why.**

Answered: 73 Skipped: 334

#	Responses	Date
1	I recall only one time in the last year when I requested inspection but did not inspect. I did not proceed with on site inspection because the documents were scanned to the county website prior to the date for inspection. I reviewed the docs on the website and printed off the pages I wanted.	9/30/2015 5:51 AM
2	n/a	9/29/2015 10:48 AM
3	None	9/28/2015 8:39 AM
4	14 counties have now jumped off of the Tennessee Property Data Homepage that was free, easy to operate and required no assistance. So you take it offline, then start complaining that too many people are requesting information at the courthouse? How stupid do you think we are? This is about hiding information and nothing more. You're not fooling anybody. Those records belong to US, not you.	9/26/2015 1:38 PM
5	Never	9/22/2015 6:22 AM
6	Never do that.	9/21/2015 5:42 PM
7	did not happen	9/20/2015 5:54 PM
8	na	9/20/2015 11:27 AM
9	Not applicable	9/19/2015 10:40 AM
10	N/A	9/18/2015 10:03 AM
11	NA	9/17/2015 11:36 AM
12	N/A	9/17/2015 11:33 AM
13	n/a	9/17/2015 11:03 AM
14	I always pick up the requested material.	9/16/2015 2:12 PM
15	none	9/16/2015 11:24 AM
16	None.	9/16/2015 6:58 AM
17	There was only one circumstance in which I was unable to physically review and inspect a public record request. In November 2013, I underwent arthroscopic hip surgery and was unable to drive during post-op recovery. Thus, I requested that my friend and esteemed journalist, Neil Siders, review the records in my absence and notified the city recorder that he would review them in my stead. Additionally, I have always picked up copies and CDs and provided the city recorder notification of approximate time of my arrival time. If I was running late for a review and inspection, I would always notify the city recorder accordingly.	9/16/2015 12:12 AM
18	n/a	9/15/2015 9:34 AM
19	I have no specific examples	9/14/2015 11:11 PM
20	n/a	9/14/2015 7:47 PM
21	If we make a request we inspect or get copies	9/14/2015 7:00 PM
22	none	9/11/2015 11:50 AM
23	N/A	9/11/2015 5:48 AM
24	I work out of town. The entity responding to my request did not advise of their office hours, and I am assuming the hours would generally be during the times that I work. I was unable to take time off of work to view the records.	9/10/2015 9:57 AM
25	N/a	9/9/2015 3:34 PM
26	Not applicable	9/9/2015 10:47 AM
27	We only do fax, mail or email. Costs are passed on to the library patron so it is preferable to keep them reasonable.	9/9/2015 9:38 AM

## Summer Study Survey- Citizen

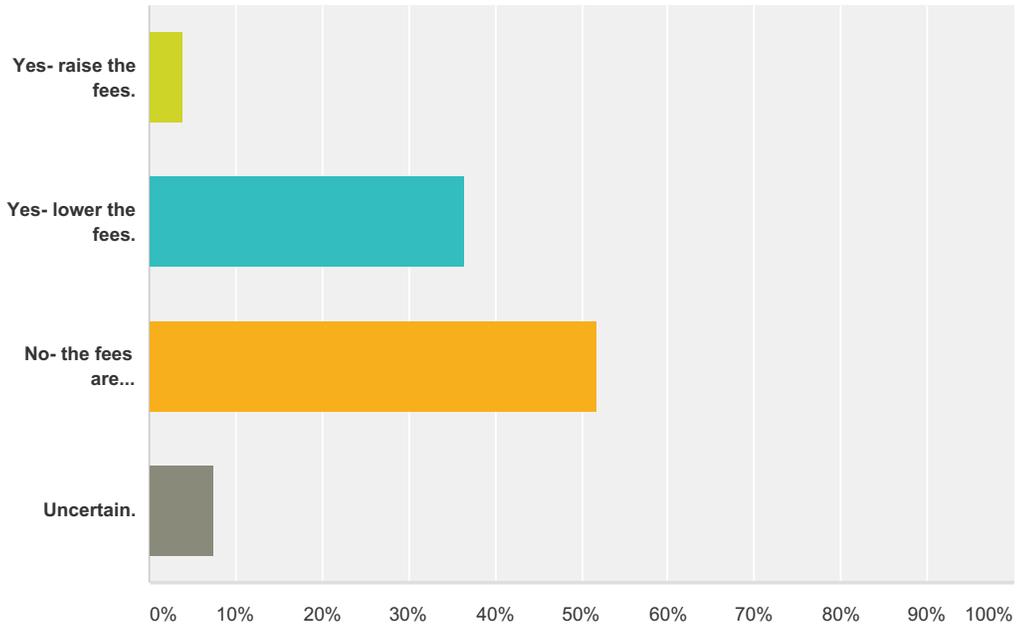
28	N/A	9/7/2015 6:35 PM
29	I asked for copies of a document but was told that I would have to make an appointment which I was unable to get because the Public party failed to respond.	9/7/2015 1:15 PM
30	n/a	9/7/2015 8:56 AM
31	N/A	9/7/2015 7:47 AM
32	Probate court records	9/6/2015 12:36 PM
33	N/a at this time	9/5/2015 2:46 PM
34	I did not pick up records because they were not the ones specifically requested.	9/5/2015 8:13 AM
35	We were not allowed. TN Comptroller told me I could sue them. who pays for an attorney? I was denied the right to review because this School Central Office did not want me to get what I knew was in these files.	9/4/2015 9:32 PM
36	N/A	9/3/2015 8:30 AM
37	n/a	9/3/2015 7:32 AM
38	A few bad apples shouldn't ruin the barrel for everyone	9/3/2015 6:39 AM
39	NA	9/2/2015 9:13 PM
40	Does not apply. Always inspect. However, question 6 above is flawed in relation to the time required to prepare. We have no way of knowing this information. And if we did the scale provided fails to give the appropriate time frames to provide an answer to the question.	9/2/2015 7:03 PM
41	0	9/2/2015 6:28 PM
42	I stopped requesting for Open Records once I found what I needed to know for a huge safety issue. I found the missing links and have pursued to change how things are being done to improve public safety	9/2/2015 5:15 PM
43	By the time the copy was ready, the story was no longer viable.	9/2/2015 4:27 PM
44	Agency estimated a "haystack" of documents in response and cost estimates in the thousands. We did pursue one such matter in 2014 that cost us about \$1000 just to get records relevant to an agency fiscal note estimate provided to the legislature.	9/2/2015 4:26 PM
45	once. someone else filed for the same information and shared it with us.	9/1/2015 11:34 AM
46	not applicable	8/25/2015 6:09 PM
47	none	8/24/2015 5:58 PM
48	n/a	8/24/2015 10:17 AM
49	not applicable	8/23/2015 10:46 AM
50	Unknown	8/21/2015 5:12 PM
51	None	8/18/2015 1:19 PM
52	N/A	8/17/2015 2:03 PM
53	I doubt this is a major issue. State & local archives & court offices should be more open to allowing digital records/photography. This would reduce time and staff resource impact.	8/17/2015 8:51 AM
54	Na	8/17/2015 7:00 AM
55	N/A	8/15/2015 8:37 AM
56	na	8/14/2015 9:17 PM
57	n/a	8/14/2015 8:48 PM
58	N/A	8/14/2015 10:13 AM
59	n/a	8/14/2015 7:46 AM
60	It seems to me that anyone who requests copies should be held responsible for any copy cost incurred regardless whether they pick them up or not.	8/14/2015 1:00 AM
61	Not applicable	8/13/2015 3:18 PM
62	Not applicable	8/13/2015 11:01 AM

## Summer Study Survey- Citizen

63	N/A	8/13/2015 10:45 AM
64	N/a	8/13/2015 10:42 AM
65	I requested records from the Department of Commerce and Insurance. They responded within the 7-day time frame that they needed more time to produce the records that they were willing to release. (They denied my request for a final audit report, claiming that it was work product, citing an ALJ's nonexistent order as law.) I had an administrative appeal for which the records were needed, and the Department was aware of that, as the Executive Director of the regulatory board showed up to each hearing regarding the matter. After over two months of waiting (when I was subject to an expedited briefing schedule), the attorney alerted me that the records were ready. I asked to come and pick them up, but he said he would be out of the office, so I could not come on the day requested. Because they dragged their feet, knowing that I needed the records by a specific date, they intentionally did not have them ready on time. I attempted to obtain them anyway, after the date, but they made it impracticable. This was the fault of the negligence and misconduct of that governmental office.	8/13/2015 10:18 AM
66	n/a	8/13/2015 9:08 AM
67	N/A	8/13/2015 6:46 AM
68	When the Sumner County Schools tried to make me go to 46 individuals schools to review records that were available at the central office. See Jakes vs Sumner County schools. Evidence was presented at trial showing the had documents I requested to inspect but were trying to send me to 46 different schools to review.	8/13/2015 1:31 AM
69	NA	8/12/2015 5:56 PM
70	na	8/12/2015 2:19 PM
71	Never	8/12/2015 1:52 PM
72	I can only recall one specific time when we chose not to inspect. However the documents had not been made available. The request was with the TN Division of Consumer Affairs and they were going to charge for copies and/or scanning. There were more than 2,000 pages in question and the starting price for the paper was \$303. We asked to inspect and were told we'd have to schedule a specific date and time in Nashville which is 3 1/2 hours away. Plus, we couldn't inspect all the documents in one day. So we opted to put the request on hold, but they never gathered the pages.	8/12/2015 12:58 PM
73	We have been told on occasion that the records clerk was too busy to provide us access to inspect records. I don't know how prevalent this is statewide, but this particular police records clerk seems to have the attitude that she can make decisions about when and who may look at police records. I fear that more of this would happen if anything is written into law giving clerks, or their superiors, an excuse or financial reason for limiting access to public records.	8/12/2015 12:22 PM

**Q11 In 2008, the Schedule of Reasonable Charges established \$0.15 per page as the charge for letter and legal sized black & white copies and \$0.50 per page for color copies. Do you believe these fees should be changed?**

Answered: 396 Skipped: 11



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes- raise the fees.	4.04% 16
Yes- lower the fees.	36.62% 145
No- the fees are appropriate.	51.77% 205
Uncertain.	7.58% 30
<b>Total</b>	<b>396</b>

## Summer Study Survey- Citizen

### Q12 Please provide comments or concerns with the current law regarding your rights as a citizen and with the current law regarding inspection and duplication of public records.

Answered: 339 Skipped: 68

#	Responses	Date
1	I have providedn detailed comments as Executive Director of Tennessee Coalition for Open Government. As a citizen, I do not believe labor fees, sometimes called search and retrieval fees, should be charged to inspect public records because I believe it will reduce access to government records, and put a chill on journalism. I was a journalist for 25 years and free and unfettered access to public records helped me and other journalists with whom I have worked produce journalism of public interest about government. In my role as executive director of TCOG, I have witnessed many citizens seek government documents of importance to them and their community, allowing them to participate as informed citizens in their government.	9/30/2015 10:56 AM
2	Public records are public records. Memphis is always looking to screw people. This is why Memphis is the armpit of America. Stop paying these people to do nothing. I have lived here since 2006 and since 2009 its become horrid. Along with the people who "run" the city. You may not charge for PUBLIC RECORDS..hence the name PUBLIC RECORD	9/30/2015 10:19 AM
3	The government is making it more difficult and costly for the citizens to check up on how our tax dollars are being wasted and to see the offenses against the people that the government is involved in.	9/30/2015 7:04 AM
4	There should be no charge for inspection of public documents. Citizens wanting copies of public records should be allowed to bring a scanner or use a cell phone to make their own copies--saving government employee time and paper/ink costs. If the governmental entity is asked or insists on making copies, the charge should be .10/copy (or less) for b&w and .25/copy for color. If a request for inspection of what is perceived as a large number of documents is received, an appropriate amount of time should be allowed for a full response or a good faith response in segments should be allowed--but no charge. Where redaction is not required, documents should be scanned to governmental websites in categories. For example, Schools: budgets, budget amendments, athletics, audits, bids, minutes of meetings, agendas, contracts and change orders, meeting packets, names of officials and employees with salaries and wages, etc). City/County: agendas, minutes, advertisements for bids and bids received, RFPs/RFQs and responses, meeting packets, contracts and change orders, names of officials and employees with salaries and wages, budgets, budget amendments, audits, etc. For those without a computer, a dedicated computer at the office of the government's chief executive/dept head should be available for public use and inspection of scanned documents. I have encountered and read about officials/custodians of records who complain about providing public documents to the public. I have also encountered public officials and custodians who go out of their way to assist in finding and locating documents and who often charge nothing for the document(s). These officials are to be commended for their recognition of the right of the PUBLIC to inspect PUBLIC documents without charge or hassle.	9/30/2015 5:51 AM
5	Up until this moment I have not had to request any information but in the future if I need to see a public record I don't want to pay for it. I believe that our tax dollars should be sufficient to provide the documentation at no additional charge.	9/29/2015 11:26 PM
6	Citizens pay for the records from beginning to end, from creation to disposal, from the paper/media they're on to the people who produce them. Citizens should be allowed to inspect them at no additional charge.	9/29/2015 10:48 AM
7	First of all the head of the Snake is Ron Ramsey. He suggested that we do away with the sunshine law all together , so we know where that crook stands on transparency. Secondly, as citizens of Tennessee we have the right to know the history of OUR property. You took Sullivan County off of the free site, used tax dollars to buy some junk database (probably from somebody's brother-in-law) and now all property records in the county HAVE to be fetched from the courthouse. Then you complain about the number of requests. You're heading in the opposite direction. We need MORE transparency to combat fascism, not less. The Internet is where every piece of open records should be. Then you wouldn't have requests. Did you know that Tennessee is the only state that has that little Ron Ramsey by-law that states (exceptions regarding public records can be made for land under development)? Know why? So pals like his Bill Gatton won't have to pay the full tax amount under the law, but everyone else will. Any questions, feel free to call. Better yet, have Ramsey's \$180,000 per year lawyer call me. I look forward to a conversation with him. But do have a nice day and certainly don't take any of this personal as none of it is directed at you specifically.	9/26/2015 1:38 PM
8	should be free to snap a picture of record by smart phone	9/25/2015 1:25 PM

## Summer Study Survey- Citizen

9	I feel citizens should have the right to have access to public records abd have copies if need be, We are still a free country.	9/25/2015 10:06 AM
10	This is bad government. Transparency should be free. I condone some form of objective vetting of requests, but it should be free.	9/24/2015 3:49 PM
11	Local governments should be free to charge less if they so choose. Citizens of Tennessee should receive a reasonable number of copies for free.	9/24/2015 2:47 PM
12	Although I have not yet had the need to inspect or request copies of public records, I do believe every citizen should have the right to inspect public records and or be charged a "reasonable fee to acquire copies of those records. The idea that any citizen would be denied access to public records is government corruption at its worst.	9/24/2015 8:13 AM
13	I have occasionally used public records in Family history studies.	9/24/2015 6:44 AM
14	Maintain zero cost for inspection. Captured tax revenue should cover those costs.	9/23/2015 9:50 PM
15	This form is insulting as this law is not about how many copies I request or how much I spend this is about the FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT. No you will not start charging as that takes the right to public records away from WE THE PEOPLE.	9/23/2015 8:54 PM
16	The law needs to be followed. The citizens need to be able to request and see any government document that is public records as required by law. Any denial of such will make the citizens distrust our government. Just follow the STATE CONSTITUTION. It gives us the right to public records. If they have nothing to hide they should be glad the citizens are interested in what is going on in OUR GOVERMENT. (State and Local).	9/23/2015 8:21 PM
17	A citizen should have the right to view all public records and not be charged a fee for doing so.	9/23/2015 5:02 PM
18	My concern is the ability of some persons to obtain public information due to cost or procedures which make the process more expensive, more difficult, or unfair based on charges being unequal depending on location.	9/23/2015 4:45 PM
19	A citizen should NOT be charged for time of employees for these records.	9/23/2015 3:38 PM
20	Our current laws allows for inspection of any and all public records and it should remain so. Have no issue paying for copies of records requested.	9/23/2015 3:35 PM
21	Public records should be public period. The barest of costs should be the goal of a government that truly has the citizen's best interest at heart. Why should information be available to those who can afford it?	9/22/2015 6:34 AM
22	These documents belong to the people of Tennessee already. Any farther change in the process to access them are over reaching of government and should be considered another government action to impede Tennesseans from their rights. Do not overstep. Take some of that floor restoration funds to cover any cost, which is minimal at best. This one we are watching.	9/22/2015 6:22 AM
23	Citizens should be able to make copies as necessary with their own equipment. Citizens should be able to obtain information in any format in which it is stored, including computer files. Citizens should be protected from the imposition of excessive fees, such as \$250/hour labor charges, for preparation of records for copying. Citizens should have some way, short of a lawsuit, of challenging unfair charges.	9/21/2015 5:42 PM
24	Access to public records is an important right of each and every citizen, and is a right that should not be limited by or suppressed because of a citizen's ability to pay money to the government.	9/21/2015 1:46 PM
25	Uphold TPRA legislation as now written. DO NOT restrict access to public records in any way and DO NOT increase cost of copies. Thank you.	9/21/2015 9:55 AM
26	There should be no labor element in the charge for copies. records should be digitized as much as possible to be efficient in the operation of government offices. Access to records for the public is a cost of government and should not be restricted for any citizen due to fees. If there are numerous blatant abuses by citizens, there can be reasonable review processes established to address the specific abuses, but overall restrictions on the citizenry by fees or otherwise are not the correct manner of dealing with abuses. Government records must be available to concerned or interested citizens to assure government is working in the best interests of the citizens.	9/21/2015 9:47 AM
27	Raising copy fees or introducing fees for inspection of records is just a thinly-veiled attempt to keep people and/or organizations with limited funds from accessing public records. People employed in offices where records are stored are being paid to make these records easily accessible to anyone wanting to see them.	9/21/2015 8:47 AM
28	Government is by the people, for the people! As result providing public records is a part of being a transparent government entity. First there should be a major effort to put all records online. Technology exists today to easily facilitate this. I've not requested records in some time but use online services as much as possible. But the people should never have to pay large sums or wait for indefinite periods of time to receive public records. This erodes public trust in our government, which is the foundation of our government!	9/21/2015 7:38 AM
29	There should be NO FEES associated with the inspection of legal documents.	9/20/2015 7:37 PM

## Summer Study Survey- Citizen

30	Charges for public inspection of records should not be permitted. Allowing inspection during reasonable hours and for reasonable amounts of records is part of the duty to the public by the state (or any public entity in the USA) – and part of the cost of doing business as a government entity. I agree and understand that accomplishing such a duty has some cost involved. However, as a citizen, I am willing and committed to pay my fair share of taxes to support this function and I have always assumed that such a function was being conducted faithfully by the state agencies. Charging a fair market rate for copies – to cover materials and equipment is reasonable in my opinion. On a personal note, I am conducting a study of all the sewage collection systems in the state of Tennessee (227). I am doing this as a private individual (I am a licensed engineer since 1982) with the intention of measuring the amount of leakage in sewer systems (or I/I – Inflow & Infiltration). This is the first time this leakage has been measured for a whole state (or nationally). The results will be valuable for the purpose of developing a state strategy for managing and reducing this costly problem (presently about \$200 million annually in Tennessee). I have no outside funding and this is on my own time. This will benefit the state – which does not have sufficient staff right now to evaluate the data in its own files for the purpose of developing management strategies. While I may continue this study if an additional charge was imposed, it certainly would have a chilling effect at a minimum (depending on the amount of the charge) and lead me to do this on a proprietary basis – rather than openly share the results. When I visited the state EFOs (TDEC environmental field offices) I have observed that the state is regularly decreasing the number of employees by buy-outs and attrition. This is a false economy measure. I cannot do anything about that management approach, but I have observed that the remaining people are struggling with their own duties and picking up those of departing colleagues.	9/20/2015 5:54 PM
31	I believe the law should remain as is. Inspection of the public record is VITAL to ensuring the public has the right to oversee our elected officials.	9/20/2015 5:24 PM
32	The people of Tennessee should have access to their records for a reasonable cost in all circumstances.	9/20/2015 5:14 PM
33	Raising the reasonable charges will limit an individual's ability to access public records. Organizations should pay a slightly higher fee on a sliding scale - as they request more records, fees should increase.	9/20/2015 11:27 AM
34	Fees for copies should be lower. Affordable public access to public records is essential. Also, commonly requested documents should be available on government websites to make citizen and media access easier.	9/20/2015 10:48 AM
35	I believe the very nature of open records indicate they should be available at any time without charge to any citizen. They belong to the public are paid for through taxpayer funded governmental offices.	9/19/2015 10:48 PM
36	I have done genealogy for 40 years and have been in many courthouses in many states. I have never been asked for money to view a public record. This is only a way to gouge for money and to discourage genealogists from accessing the records of life of our ancestors. What part of PUBLIC don't they understand?	9/19/2015 2:27 PM
37	In a democracy the people have a right and a duty to know what their government is doing. This means they must have access to government records. Charging to view records denies access to to all but those who can afford to view them. Hence the term 'public records viewing fee' is an oxymoron. No record is public if there is a pre-condition to the viewing of the record. As far as fees for copying records, those fees should be based solely on the actual cost of copies, which I believe to be far less than 15 cents per page. Since government exists to serve the people, any expense associated with retrieval of documents is a cost to be borne by the government which generates and stores the documents. Consider it a cost of doing business.	9/19/2015 10:40 AM
38	As a TN taxpayer I feel I have the right to know what goes on in our government without having to pay extra for this right	9/19/2015 6:41 AM
39	I don't think fees should be increased, or that more fees should be introduced.	9/18/2015 9:32 PM
40	The current law regarding the inspection and duplication of public records is fine. I believe the proposal to charge a fee for the inspection of public records is antithetical to the sunshine and transparency in which the TN government is supposed to operate. Such payments are comparable to a new tax and would pay for services governments already are expected to be providing.	9/18/2015 11:52 AM
41	We pay taxes to fund the government. Those taxes should cover the expenses of maintaining and providing open access to public records without any additional fees at the point of delivery. If the state needs more money to fund public records access, it should cut spending in another area, and reallocate funds for this essential government function. Charging a fee is a barrier between the citizens of TN and public records, access to which they have a right.	9/18/2015 10:03 AM
42	Open records should be open to the public at no cost.	9/18/2015 7:29 AM
43	Providing open access to government records and documents with as little barrier as possible is absolutely fundamental to the ability of citizens to ensure their rights as provided under our constitution. It's also critical to ensuring freedom of the press. Placing any monetary cost on these records is abhorrent, but to consider increasing the cost further is just unthinkable. As is, the costs can serve as a barrier to those who are already most disenfranchised. I cannot help but think that any effort to increase prices must come from a place of sheer spite of the citizens of this state, the concept of open government, and the constitution of this country.	9/18/2015 2:46 AM

## Summer Study Survey- Citizen

44	The records were created using public resources and the personnel are already on the payroll, both of which are supported by my taxes. Why should I have to pay extra to get a copy of their work product? Once a fee is in place, it will tend to increase with time, we saw this happen in California.	9/17/2015 8:38 PM
45	The proposed fee for inspecting public records alarms me. I am a citizen and enjoy the knowledge that it is my right, if I so choose, to be able to view public records, and that others may as well. It is important for citizens, including media, to have open access to those records as part of a free society and to have a check upon the government. The current law already provides for fees for things such as copying. But it is important to keep in mind the example of DCS and the demands for thousands of dollars to provide information they should have had ready. Charging a fee for all access can only result in impeding our right to information.	9/17/2015 7:59 PM
46	Open records should be open. Added charges and fees are just ways to shield records and deny the public the right to know, and should be unacceptable.	9/17/2015 6:13 PM
47	The time it takes to stop your regular duties to comply with the request, obtain the records, review records to ensure PII are not on the documents, copy said documents, and mail continue to be issue. The disruption of your work to complete the request is an issue. Also, some request are made every 3 to 6 months the same request. Mainly for people trying to get business from other vendors, or coaches. This is truly a waste of time because the majority of these request are coming from someone out of town and they find an individual or a company that will pay them a fee to utilize their identification to obtain said records as a citizen. This is very budensome and unnecessary.	9/17/2015 5:32 PM
48	Public records are the property of We the People, not any Government. Viewing Public Records is every citizen's duty in the course of supervising our governments.	9/17/2015 5:22 PM
49	I am a citizen concerned that the right to inspect public records, the process plus the cost should not be onerous for any citizen.	9/17/2015 3:36 PM
50	As a citizen and professional, I believe that open records are the single most important factor in keeping government transparent. It really isn't totally working now as individuals in the system are quite skilled at keeping people from seeing records and acting as though they have no right to see them. Tax payers are providing funding to provide for keeping records and making them available for inspection as needed. Now, someone had a brain flick on how to charge the public to make them UNAVAILABLE. Charging fees to access PUBLIC RECORDS is an oxymoron. Apparently, the public is judged to be too stupid to figure that out. This proposal is ludicrous and an insult to the already government-overloaded public! Charlotte Boatwright, R.N., L. P.C., Ph. D.	9/17/2015 3:35 PM
51	Government will outsource work to private companies both for profit and non-profit, that do not always want to be transparent. Accessing these records via the state open records law is the only way to show abuse of the taxpayer paid programs.	9/17/2015 3:11 PM
52	My main concern is not charging for inspection. A narrow exception for time spent redacting PII is acceptable. We have been able to afford copying, but it is an important safety valve that in voluminous papers, we can always inspect.	9/17/2015 11:36 AM
53	If the Open Records Act changes and there is a charge just to view public records, our vendors will have to charge more for criminal record searches. This cost will be passed on to us and we will be forced to pass the cost onto our clients. Tennessee is going through a growth period which is requiring more employees to be placed in jobs. These jobs require background screenings. Jobs are being created in all forms of industry ranging from industrial to medical. Does the State of Tennessee want to cause a halt or problem such as expensive record access that will directly affect companies looking to move to Tennessee? Records released to the news media, DCS and legal professionals is just a small part of what increased pricing by court clerks would affect. Let's don't take steps back due to clerks needing assistance with providing records. Criminal Records are made available throughout the United States to vendors without unreasonable charges. Tennessee is potentially setting up a "records system" that will undo everything that has been accomplished by the Open Records Act. The big picture needs to be viewed. It is not about clerks printing or researching records. Their job is to assist and keep the system flowing smoothly. Tennessee will create a problem for companies looking to move and build here if employees can't be probably screened due to a cost prohibitive background screenings budget.	9/17/2015 11:33 AM
54	WHILE I AM NOT A REGULER USER OF THIS SYSTEM, I VIEW THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FEES AS THE LEGISTATION TO MAKE THEY DEALINGS LESS TRANSPARENT. ALL RECORDS SHOULD BE ONLINE FOR ALL TO SEE.	9/17/2015 11:04 AM
55	Copying costs less and many things are pdfs now	9/17/2015 11:03 AM
56	I do not feel it is appropriate to tax private citizens for copies of public documents. The press should have access to all public information even if there is a minor fee, i.e. \$0.15 per copy is not unreasonable for the press. Anything higher would be considered unreasonable. The press should have access to public computers if it is determined it would take too much time for city, county, state or federal employees to access the public record instead of being charged legal fees of over \$500 per hour to look up information.	9/17/2015 10:41 AM

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57	The attempt to change the current law is going to prevent individuals with limited financial resources from accessing records, is going to prevent journalists from adequately researching stories and story leads, and is going to add to the cost of legal representation making it even more difficult for lower middle income and low income individuals to obtain even slightly affordable legal representation. In an age of digital everything, there is little reason for any quibbling about this when records could be digitized to a degree that the "preparation" was a simple query of a database. I believe that this is not about cost as much as it is about finding a way to reduce the transparency of the legislative process further, and that that attempt will ultimately and very negatively impact individual citizens relevant to legal issues and court cases. I vehemently oppose the pending legislation and urge the legislative body to INCREASE transparency even more.	9/17/2015 10:02 AM
58	The availability of access to Gov Records is paramount to the best interest of those who are ruled by Gov. If the burden is too great, then establish a process (hiring employees to handle the request for information) to handle this issue.	9/17/2015 8:03 AM
59	I understand charging a "copy fee," even though I disagree with "charging" for records already paid for by taxpayers. To that end, charging a fee for simply "viewing" (to include photographing with a "smart phone") is nothing more an easy (passive) way to raise revenue on "the back" of taxpayers. The information already belongs to the "taxpayers," why should we be charged twice?	9/17/2015 6:54 AM
60	I am a concern taxpayer and I think elected officials should not 'swallow a camel and strain at a knat'. It seems some elected officials tout the benefits of 'investing' the tax payer dollar at every turn, but balk when it comes to accountability - this certainly happened in Williamson Co. It is my opinion, that requests for information which in the end will have the 'effect' of holding elected officials accountable directly or indirectly to the taxpayer should never be thwarted for any reason. Further, increases in fees will just have an negative impact on accountability.	9/17/2015 6:24 AM
61	There are cases to be made for keeping records under seal that are not part of the debate. With respect to public records, as a genealogist I often find it unnecessarily expensive to obtain certain public records and the 100 years rule to be frustrating. Certain states restrict access to direct descendants, which is also frustrating, and the Social Security Administration abuses privacy protection when genealogists try to verify information (rather than request it) due to many individuals sharing common names.	9/17/2015 12:37 AM
62	Aa safe harbor the \$015/\$0.50 seems fine. The alternative method that includes labor hours for retrieval and copying leaves the process open to the possibility of mischief. Perhaps the safe harbors should be re-crafted as ranges and the labor hour element removed.	9/16/2015 2:12 PM
63	I strongly oppose any restrictions to the inspection of public documents. It is our right as citizens to inspect these documents and should not be dependent on ability to pay. There should be no increase to the duplication fee, as it is in line with duplication fees at other public and private entities. I feel that this is an attempt to thwart public participation in government.	9/16/2015 2:10 PM
64	We are opposed to any proposal to allow government entities or any entity that falls under the public records act to charge fees to inspect public records.	9/16/2015 1:18 PM
65	Citizens/taxpayers pay for all these services through the budget. It may be proper to tie a payment scale based upon the number of pages desired.	9/16/2015 12:43 PM
66	They should not have fees.	9/16/2015 11:24 AM
67	Public records belong to the people and are paid for by taxes. We should not have to pay, again, for records that already belong to us.	9/16/2015 9:36 AM
68	I am adamantly OPPOSED to any change in the law that would limit my ability to find, view, and obtain public records.	9/16/2015 6:58 AM
69	Unfortunately, the city of Hendersonville creates wedges and uses tactics that make it very difficult to review public records such as making you sift through reams of records you did not request, play word games to stall in providing records, and fail to provide records requested. Some records have changed from one inspection to the next. Some records such as receipts are whited out so you cannot see purchases. Frankly, our records are a mess and we have uncovered wasteful spending and misuse of tax dollars. As a result, the mayor tried to pass a resolution to increase costs and use "labor" as a means to make it difficult and cost prohibitive to review and obtain copies of public records. The mayor overstepped and usurped the Board power as such changes must be done by ordinance, which must go before the Board. (See link on subject here: <a href="https://www.comptroller.tn.gov/openrecords/pdf/20131015ResolutionVOrdinanceAmendedClean13_02.pdf">https://www.comptroller.tn.gov/openrecords/pdf/20131015ResolutionVOrdinanceAmendedClean13_02.pdf</a> ) How can this behavior align with the concept of "open records"? I was never treated so badly or had a bad experience when requesting records from other cities. My hope is that our state follows laws in Georgia that fine individuals who play these games and violate citizens' rights to access public records and avoid such behavior (See page 8, section E in this link <a href="http://www.gfaf.org/resources /resourcesBlueBook.pdf">http://www.gfaf.org/resources /resourcesBlueBook.pdf</a> )	9/16/2015 12:12 AM

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70	With regard to the current law, the time line for response to requests if appropriate and the law makes provisions for when the request cannot be met within the time line. Cap any copy costs at for outside entities charged with producing documents at the rate that would be charged by the custodian if they had been able to produce the same documents. Remove the prohibition against citizens using cameras and smart phone cameras from recording images of public records.	9/15/2015 11:05 PM
71	As tax payers, citizens should not be charged to obtain access to or photocopy documentation of records.	9/15/2015 10:17 PM
72	I believe citizens, and the media, should have easy access to public records and to copies of them, with no fee for access and the lowest fee possible for copies. These are public records and belong to the public, not to government.	9/15/2015 8:26 PM
73	This is the United States of America where citizens expect to have public records of our land available to all. This is our right to view records of our history, culture and life. We do not need to limit this right by charging a fee to do so. Photocopy charges are reasonable, however there should be no reason why a digital copy should not be made of a printed document. For records that are available online, there certainly should be no reason for some money-making fee to access them from a public computer or a computer in one's own home or business. When dumb ideas like this one--charging for access to public records--shows up in Tennessee state government, my standard phrase comes to the forefront. That is "You can't make this stuff up."	9/15/2015 9:40 AM
74	No significant concerns with current law. If it ain't broke, don't fix it.	9/15/2015 9:34 AM
75	It is crucial that citizens be allowed to freely inspect public records regarding the actions of their own government. To charge a fee for inspecting records would create a barrier for local residents and reduce the accountability of government to its constituents. I strongly oppose charging a fee for inspection of public records.	9/15/2015 8:33 AM
76	I am spending my time, and fuel to get to the public records location(s). I feel that it is my right as a taxpaying TN citizen to inspect these records free of charge. If I wish to have copies, the State of TN should charge the prevailing commercial rate (Kinko's, FedEx Office, UPS, etc.)	9/14/2015 11:11 PM
77	I believe all records of this nature should be free charge to the general public.	9/14/2015 7:47 PM
78	The current law is fair. Charging to read or copy the records is not fair. If there are abuses in particular counties or agencies the people asking these requests will eventually stop. These are public records which means the public should be able to review.	9/14/2015 7:00 PM
79	Tennessee is far behind other states in online access to public records. The cost to digitize and make most records needed by the public is minimal and should be encouraged. This will eliminate staff time compiling and /or copying. While not everything can be available on line it should be. Many states charge for assisted online document searches which are very thorough and very inexpensive. In addition, the State document retention policy needs to be reviewed. Absent a litigation hold, currently all emails are deleted after 90 days. Unless the employee intentionally retains a document, even documents attached to emails are lost forever. The retention policy should be changed to at least allow older emails to be archived but made available upon request.	9/14/2015 6:28 PM
80	Increasing the fees is simply a way to charge more money when they know that in certain circumstances citizens must have copies of records and must pay the fee. Those who can't afford the fee are discriminated against. This is akin to the punitive and discriminatory "court fees" being utilized to turn our jails into debtors' prisons. It's a slippery slope I do not wish to see govt slide down.	9/14/2015 6:07 PM
81	If by "current law," you mean the one proposed by the legislation, it should be the custodian's responsibility to provide access to records. Charges for copies should be the responsibility of the requestor and should include the cost of administration (i.e., stocking paper, paying for copiers, etc.). I have no problem with doubling or even tripling the cost of copies, but I have a huge problem with charging for access to open records. Please note I feel entirely differently for organizations that submit time-intensive requests or who use the information for profit.	9/14/2015 5:30 PM
82	Open records should remain open for inspection without charge in the interests of government transparency and equal access regardless of income.	9/14/2015 4:13 PM
83	I would hope that no citizen would abuse the time of staff members in retrieving or duplicating records for frivolous means.	9/14/2015 2:40 PM
84	If the records are public, and I'm a taxpayer, why should I have to pay? Aren't tax dollars paying for the salaries and office overhead?	9/14/2015 12:42 PM
85	Essentially all of the records that we have requested at the state level in TN have been either free online or available in person or by email. Virtually all of these have been routine minutes, exhibits, correspondence, policies, etc that are usually readily available with minimal, if any, search. I am fully aware, however, that many citizens and journalists frequently need more extensive records that entail search time or redaction and who have sometimes experienced what they believe are intentional delay or denial.	9/14/2015 9:15 AM
86	Public records created at public expense should be available for public inspection at no charge.	9/14/2015 7:26 AM

## Summer Study Survey- Citizen

87	The TPRA has much room for improvement to meet "best practices." And, the TPRA is only one aspect of open government; operating to the spirit of the law is quite another.	9/13/2015 10:33 PM
88	Citizens should have the right to inspect and duplicate public records.	9/13/2015 3:09 PM
89	I believe that free access to view public records is a necessary part of a functioning democracy. While I have not requested to view public documents in the time period specified in this survey, I have in the past. The costs to produce and manage public documents have already been paid and, while a nominal charge for copies is reasonable, the viewing of public documents by the public should continue to be free.	9/13/2015 10:27 AM
90	Although I have not requested access to public records in the time frame listed in this survey, I have needed documents in the past. Taxpayers already pay for these documents and their storage. Viewing of the documents should NOT be charged - period.	9/13/2015 10:16 AM
91	Citizens should NOT be denied access to public records which are collected and filed at public expense. We do not need or want anything done in secret without public purview. Who benefits from secret records?	9/11/2015 11:50 AM
92	I believe any citizen should be allowed to review public records at no charge. The public does pay for the records to be developed and followed and the fees that pay the personnel and staff. Charging for copies is reasonable.	9/11/2015 11:29 AM
93	The current law regarding inspection at no cost should remain.	9/11/2015 11:27 AM
94	Public records should be freely available to the public. charging creates and impediment to access. A charge to compensate for your expenses is fine.	9/11/2015 11:22 AM
95	I don't have to use this service very often, but when I do, I feel it is my right as a citizen to view this information free of charge. I understand having a fee if copies are needed.	9/11/2015 9:52 AM
96	A free society must have unrestricted access to public records of government. The cost for this unrestricted access should be paid through the general funds of the governments. The revenues needed to fund this service should be levied on all. If an individual or a group is being restricted to public information (by fees), they may not gather all pertinent information on a subject that is needed to make an informed decision and/or take the right course of action.	9/11/2015 5:48 AM
97	The current law seems to focus correctly on unburdening government of direct costs for providing customized citizen services. When existing web sources are available, requesters for open records should be informed of alternative access to existing public web sources. Inspection, like copying, should only focus on recovering direct costs for satisfying customized requests. It would seem cost-effective to avoid charging for materials where the cost of collection by the government (receipting, cash control, accounting, etc.) would exceed the funds collected. In order to not unduly burden the citizens, physical funds collection should be at the point of service delivery.	9/10/2015 5:41 PM
98	The law is only as good as it is enforced. The county mayor and EMS Committee of Bledsoe County does not abide by the Open Meetings Act, Open Records Act, or any other act for that matter. The overwhelming view is, "The state doesn't tell me how to run my office!" We citizens are left hanging high and dry and are forced to pay for legal counsel in order to get things accomplished. The state should reserve the right to force governing bodies to make available requested documents so long as the requests fall under legal terms and principal. The office of open records has been very helpful in assisting me in my requests, however there is nothing that can be done from that end to force them to comply with the law.	9/10/2015 1:59 PM
99	Labor should be charged when the inspection takes more than 2 hours. In other words, the first 2-hours are at no charge.	9/10/2015 10:35 AM
100	In my limited experience, many public entities, such as the Jackson Madison County School Superintendent's office, are unfamiliar with the law and attempt to hide behind it saying that they do not have to produce the records. Making any change to the law that makes it MORE difficult to see public records is contrary to the public interest.	9/10/2015 9:57 AM
101	We've already paid for these records collectively, and while a copying charge is reasonable, a fee for inspection is not.	9/10/2015 9:24 AM
102	I have no real problems with the current law, but strongly oppose changing the law to charge citizens for simply inspecting records generated by the government they make possible. Public records belong to the public, not to public servants. An attempt to charge for simply inspecting them is an insult to the citizens whose taxes pay to produce the records. It is wrong, wrong, wrong.	9/9/2015 8:24 PM
103	It is a citizen's right to view it free of charge.	9/9/2015 6:24 PM
104	Depending on the request, some documents could be sent electronically rather than duplicated, especially numeric data. That could change the cost structure. It could be more efficient for all concerned. You may also want to consider the possibility of sending in an excel format if the request is for analysis of data. If you must send on a flash drive, for example due to the volume of data, that should be considered as well.	9/9/2015 3:34 PM
105	Access to public records should be made free to all citizens.	9/9/2015 12:10 PM

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106	Inspection of public records by the public should be ABSOLUTELY FREE inasmuch as the public own those records. It is, however, appropriate to charge a nominal fee for the copying of such records.	9/9/2015 11:44 AM
107	I, and my organization, strongly oppose allowing governments to charge for viewing records. In many cases this would effectively make the records unavailable to the public. First, this would obviously be detrimental to citizens who shouldn't have to pay AGAIN (they have already paid through their taxes) to learn about how their government is working for them. Second, just as local governments have seen revenues drop, so have media outlets. The number of media outlets is shrinking and remaining media budgets are even smaller. Increasing fees will only reduce access to public information that we can share with the public -- and governments know that. At least some governments would take advantage of this to effectively bar public access through high charges. I would have less problem with the concept of allowing local governments to charge for gathering records for viewing IF the requester never shows up to view them. I am also troubled by the concept of local governments being allowed to charge me someone's time to "supervise" me while I view documents. I could simply be put in someone's office where they are working anyway in order for them to tell I'm not stealing or defacing documents -- they don't need to devote all their time to staring at me. Another problem is charging per page for documents that are provided electronically. I think these documents should be free, since the original idea behind allowing local governments to charge for copies at all was that they should be able to recoup their copying costs. If there are no copying costs, I see no justification for charging for pdfs of records or other electronically-provided records. (I am finding that many governments do not do this, but some do.)	9/9/2015 11:11 AM
108	Do not charge for inspection of public records, because it will dissuade people from seeking them. Our freedom of information is very precious. "There can be no liberty for a community which lacks the information by which to detect lies." (Walter Lippmann) Our news media are severely biased and many of our public figures are self-serving. Freedom of information is essential for the survival of our republic. Please keep public access to public information free. Thank you.	9/9/2015 10:47 AM
109	For accuracy in performing my job, I need access to public records.	9/9/2015 10:20 AM
110	Any fee is prohibitive so they should only be as high as necessary to pay for the cost of staff and supplies, and retention costs in regards to government information. This is NOT an area in which profits should be sought as in many instances we have already paid our taxes and therefore paid for the retention, staff and supplies.	9/9/2015 9:38 AM
111	There should be NO Charge for inspection of any public records via internet access or in the office which has custody of those records. To institute a charge for the mere inspection of records is inappropriate. I have sometimes found that the record I though I needed was not the correct one. A reasonable charge for copying is necessary.	9/8/2015 9:14 AM
112	I believe that all records should be free, period, without question or dispute.	9/8/2015 8:45 AM
113	INSPECTION of records should be at no charge since the records are already paid for with public funds/fees and are already on file and do not require creation of records or copies. DUPLICATION cost should be on a per page basis and time required to retrieve and produce the copy. As a tax payer I see no justification for charging for INSPECTION of existing public records.	9/8/2015 7:56 AM
114	The current law is fine, but not the plans to change it! Reviewing of documents must remain without cost to all citizens in order to maintain proper governmental transparency to all those the governments serves. Furthermore, making reviews a "pay for service" will severely discriminate against those with less means. Government must remain transparent, which means, we citizens shall not have to pay a few to inspect that transparency. Transparency must be self-evident, ie., available with minimal effort by its citizens.	9/7/2015 6:35 PM
115	Free access to public records by citizens is one of the bedrocks of our democratic republic. Charging to inspect is a step backward toward secrecy and cover-up.	9/7/2015 4:20 PM
116	The law is not being conformed to by a number of jurisdictions including the State Courts. I submit that some jurisdictions are in serious non-compliance and that some form of sanction or fine should be made on the non-conforming party, individually and severally. There is a general feeling among some employees and Officials that "they" work for themselves and not the People they are empowered and Chartered to serve.	9/7/2015 1:15 PM
117	I feel that this survey is focusing on the government's interests in limiting the amount of staff time spent on preparing public records for public viewing. The more important perspective is the public's right to review public records. As the custodians of public records, preparing records for public review is a regular part of a government employee's job. Adding a fee to review public records would seriously limit the public's access to those records. Whether it's private individuals who can't afford to pay to review the records they need, or media organizations who are trying to control their budgets, charging someone to view a record could deter them from obtaining the record(s) that they have a right to see. The government is the custodian of public records, charging citizens to view them makes it seem as if the government owns them. The government is just the caretaker.	9/7/2015 10:06 AM
118	There should be no fee to view public records.	9/7/2015 9:07 AM

## Summer Study Survey- Citizen

119	Public records should be provided to citizens free of charge. In the past I have requested certain records and in two instances those responsible either denied access or did not respond in a timely manner (it took a year and a second request). These requests were for very early motor vehicle registrations (1905 to 1940) from county clerks. Some clerks are co-operative, some are not.	9/7/2015 8:56 AM
120	I am concerned that making records harder or more expensive to get encourages corruption and secrecy within the state government.	9/7/2015 8:53 AM
121	Fees to peruse public records should not be allowed.	9/7/2015 8:14 AM
122	We, the taxpayer, are paying for all the expense of government including politicians and bureaucrats. We sacrifice and government lives like fat cats. It is past time that you people learn that money does not grow on trees.	9/7/2015 7:47 AM
123	There should be NO FEES for simply inspecting public records. I have only rarely requested records, and not as a member of the organizations listed above, but I do rely on journalists and public activists to keep informed and I feel strongly that they should not be charged for simply inspecting public records. Whatever labor by clerks is involved in making those records available is already paid for by our taxes. Also, those inspecting public records should be able to photograph those records, rather than paying for copies.	9/7/2015 7:25 AM
124	I want to be able to see records if I choose to do so. Do not make them inaccessible or charge for access	9/6/2015 10:30 PM
125	It would NOT be appropriate nor reasonable for we citizens, who are paying to collect and maintain these records, to be forced to pay a fee to merely view and inspect them when not requesting copies.	9/6/2015 8:31 PM
126	There should be no fees for perusing public records. We are the owners of the records and should not pay to see them.	9/6/2015 6:28 PM
127	Most of my record requests are over the phone and require sending a letter and payment before the records are sent to me. Sometimes the process takes two weeks to complete. The public would be better-served if simple, inexpensive up-to-date technology was utilized by all government offices - i.e., internet, printer/scanner/faxes, scanning wands for large docket books. I run a small one-person company on a shoe-string budget but have all the same technology that large companies utilize for their administration purposes. For instance, requested records could be faxed or scanned/mailed to the requestor within the hour of a telephone request for a standard fee of (for example) \$2. The office staff would spend less time handling a records request and the requestor would receive the records within the hour. Use a central office or accepting credit card payments and then forwarding the paid records request to the requestor. In person inspection and records duplication requests could be at the current costs if a paper copy is requested but at the \$2 charge if they want the records sent to them electronically.	9/6/2015 4:56 PM
128	As a citizen of Jefferson County Tennessee, I am very concerned with my ability to access public records. I feel very strongly that citizens should have this right with no restrictions and with minimal cost. I am presently a plaintiff in a case involving open records in Jefferson County TN.	9/6/2015 4:26 PM
129	No fee should be charged for looking at public records.	9/6/2015 4:04 PM
130	never charge for inspection of records of any type!	9/6/2015 2:30 PM
131	Public records are the property of the citizens of Tennessee and as such it is reprehensible to even consider charging any fees to peruse these documents.	9/6/2015 2:00 PM
132	As citizens of Tennessee we do not feel it appropriate to be charged a fee just to look at public records.	9/6/2015 1:58 PM
133	I am opposed to increases in the charges. In the spirit of openness, there should not be increased barriers to fulfillment of needed requests. This is my strong opinion as a citizen, in spite of the fact that *I* have never made a request.	9/6/2015 1:38 PM
134	Do not allow or levy any new or additional fees	9/6/2015 12:36 PM
135	State employees are already paid by "me," so the primary cost related to materials. And if you sent the documents via EMAIL, you could avoid all that paper, and toner, and time standing at a hot copier. . . .	9/6/2015 12:25 PM
136	Do not charge to view records. This is wrong!!! This is fundamentally wrong. We as taxpayers pay your salary and our voice must be heard.	9/6/2015 11:36 AM
137	Fees make it difficult to monitor the actions of elected officials and are counter productive to an open government.	9/6/2015 10:55 AM
138	The recent proposal in the Legislature to charge for every information request by a public citizen is ludicrous. This proposal would not even be considered by a Government that really works for, and exists at the discretion of, its citizens. It seems more like something I've read about in a Russian or Czechoslovakian short story.	9/6/2015 10:47 AM

## Summer Study Survey- Citizen

139	1. Charging for inspection of public records has a chilling effect on the media--freedom of speech--1st Amendment. 2. It makes it harder for ordinary citizens to learn information that's important enough to keep on file. 3. It will hit those with lower incomes harder. 4. Citizens should be able to see anything that government keeps except national security documents that are a threat to security. That's why they're called "public" records. 5. It will raise costs to everyone who uses the services of an entity that depends on public information. This idea impedes the flow of important and necessary information, and it stinks.	9/6/2015 10:40 AM
140	Access to public records should be free to the public. The focus of government should be upon making access easier by creating more no cost online view and retrievable opportunities.	9/6/2015 8:40 AM
141	Transparency should be the goal. No change to the existing fee schedule unless you lower them.	9/6/2015 3:06 AM
142	I think the way it currently is will be best way .	9/5/2015 2:46 PM
143	Inspection should remain unchanged !!! we pay the salary of the staff !!!	9/5/2015 2:41 PM
144	The Office of Open Records contacted me once for clarification and never responded back.	9/5/2015 8:13 AM
145	There should be no deterrent to any citizen when a request for inspection of public records. Custodians don't do much work at all. Most of their day is spent doing nothing. It is absurd that there even be consideration to making any new rule that would in any way prevent the public from viewing public records and or inspecting public records. There should be action taken to increase transparency. No policy should be adopted that makes transparency more restrictive. Stop the madness. Make our Government transparent and accountable to the public.	9/4/2015 11:20 PM
146	Current law SHOULD stay in place to assure and allow transparency! IF filed correctly, "review" should be allowed when requested. When an individual or organization requests copies, the current fees are appropriate. Please reach out to me to come before this Counsel!	9/4/2015 9:32 PM
147	The kind of records I want can be looked up and viewed with help. We need to put more records in digital format so that records repositories are available with out using a government employee to help,	9/4/2015 6:02 PM
148	It should be free for us to inspect "our" records collected by our public servants, and about our public servant's work. If a citizen or group is making frivolous requests, there are legal options to stop them, provided that evidence is clear that they are wasting taxpayer dollars or harassing city staff.	9/4/2015 5:03 PM
149	The ability to inspect public records is vital to ensure honesty and integrity by officials of both 501c(3) as well as elected government officials. The record of misuse and abuse is available to you in cases where a citizen has uncovered these actions by inspecting public records. These records are a product of our tax money and we should not be forced to pay just to view them. We have already paid for them, they belong to us, the public, and should be available for viewing during normal office hours.	9/4/2015 2:46 PM
150	Fees should be waived for not for profit groups. More info should be on the web. In past years, local government often seemed unable understand what was being requested, so examining the documents was necessary.	9/4/2015 11:35 AM
151	It is my understanding from media reports that the law does not allow requesters to make their own copies of public records. We routinely bring our own scanner to copy documents to a laptop during our review of records. This saves us money, saves significant time and effort for the agency (almost always TDEC), and means that we get our copies right away. As long as requesters are not allowed to take records off-site, this should be allowed.	9/4/2015 10:21 AM
152	The State should NOT be charging citizens of this State for copies of public records. Either remove these fees OR lower them. DO NOT RAISE THEM. You will be alienating citizens who can not afford them if and when they need them.	9/4/2015 2:45 AM
153	Copy fees are often charged when the documents could be provided on a disc or a flash drive for less. The option of receiving documents electronically is rarely offered.	9/3/2015 3:50 PM
154	I tried to get a copy of a court order from Hamilton County Circuit Court Clerk, but did not want a 14-page attachment, because of cost. They would not copy the 2-page Order and said I could not scan it with i-phone, i-pad, etc. We need a state law instructing the Hamilton County Circuit Court Clerk's office to use some common sense and to not be stupid.	9/3/2015 2:51 PM
155	There should be no charge whatsoever for inspecting records, just for copying them. The taxpayers already pay the salary of workers who might be called upon to help with that, and citizens shouldn't be charged twice.	9/3/2015 1:25 PM
156	ALL Records including the Governor's office and the Legislature should be open and free to all citizens.	9/3/2015 10:57 AM
157	Agencies in west Tennessee do not comply with the Open Records law. They simply ignore it.	9/3/2015 10:38 AM

## Summer Study Survey- Citizen

158	I have been denied public records(metro Nashville police and 911 phone recordings) and the comptroller did little for me.The police report is#2010-771700.My house was partially destroyed and my 7yr old son was abused.One of the persons involved in this was a metro Nashville police sargeant who is a family member of my estranged wife.This record is sealed.I would love to tell my story of how MNPD has used open records law to protect one of their own and risked my childs safety	9/3/2015 10:36 AM
159	If the records belong to the public, they should be free. It is the public's taxes that run the offices that prepare the record requests.	9/3/2015 9:44 AM
160	All public records should be stored digitally and available free to anybody.	9/3/2015 9:22 AM
161	As a citizen & school board member, I find it offensive that fees would be raised. Records are there to provide those citizens interested, necessary visibility to ensure there are checks and balances. To be honest, there are not enough checks and balances OR interested citizens, particularly in public schools. As a newly elected school board member, I was appalled that I was harassed & pressured to drop a request. Those records revealed inappropriate activity, specifically, the superintendent, members of staff and PTO officers engaging in political activity that was an abuse of their respective offices in my opinion. The Registry of Election Finance has declared those activities to be political in nature & group was declared to be an unregistered PAC. Our Superintendent was actively engaging with that group. Is that not a conflict of interest? Without access to open records, tyrannical, inappropriate behavior would be more rampant than it already is in Williamson County.	9/3/2015 9:19 AM
162	It has been my personal experience that the City of Jackson regularly hides behind this law and does not follow it with regard to public records. They rarely release anything in a timely fashion and almost always subject you to questions from the City's attorney, Lewis Cobb. Mr. Cobb often denies the existence of known records. Considering my experience the Open Records Law needs to be strengthened and not weakened. I have worked with the open records counsel in the past and find them to be responsive but their powers for enforcement are limited. Often times a citizen is denied access to public records wrongly and their only recourse is to file a lawsuit in Chancery Court. This is an onerous task and quite frankly is a detriment to obtaining the records. Most people do not have the resources to file a lawsuit even if they are likely to prevail. If you want to keep government open, fair and honest please not only keep the current laws but work to strengthen not weaken them.	9/3/2015 8:30 AM
163	n/a	9/3/2015 7:32 AM
164	Please do all you can to promote democracy by freeing up information wherever possible for the general public. In this day and time they ought to be online.	9/3/2015 6:39 AM
165	I think the law should stay the same. But do feel that you should not have t file a lawsuit to force them to turn over public records. They can avoid turning them ovr if a person does not have the money to file a lawsuit.	9/3/2015 5:09 AM
166	Access to public records is an essential right of all citizens. There should be no toll booths on exercising the rights of a citizen.	9/3/2015 3:25 AM
167	Fees are prohibitive to encouraging public involvement in governmental processes. Records are often requested to find information local governments and municipalities are trying to hide or obscure within their bureaucracies. Documentation is often the only way to verify that ethical standards are being followed.	9/2/2015 11:15 PM
168	Citizens should not be charged with any copies of records especially if the records involved political or corruption.	9/2/2015 10:29 PM
169	Labor of state employees to comply with requests or redactions should not be added to the cost of records requested.	9/2/2015 9:42 PM
170	Public officials and employees are already paid by the taxpaying citizens, why would we need to pay them again? They answer to no one and if we have to pay to inspect they will sure enough do whatever they want to do without the fear of being caught!	9/2/2015 9:31 PM
171	Environmental organizations and concerned citizens rely on access to state and local government records. So do folks concerned with good government and specific aspects of public policy and law.	9/2/2015 9:13 PM
172	Open Records should mean just that; open to the public. Individual citizens should be exempt from having to pay to see a public document, but I can understand charging an organization for the same privilege. The idea of "public" lends itself to the notion of individualism. An organization is not an individual, and might not even reside within the state borders. Non the less, it is more likely their interest in a public document has more to do with politics or business or even lobbying.	9/2/2015 8:12 PM
173	I do not support the ability of government agencies being able to charge people for requests to inspect records. The records are public records and therefore public property. If this type of legislation is enacted, I think it is very important that safeguards are in place that prevent abuse by government officials, perhaps a court or administrative appeal process. There should be a cap on the amount charged for inspection. The agency could always just make electronic copies available for inspection on a computer. I understand there is one person in particular who has received criticism as possibly abusing the right to inspect records. The law should not be changed because of one annoying person with too much time on his hands or some axe to grind. Very few people would ever abuse the right to inspect records. Be careful in changing the law.	9/2/2015 7:37 PM

## Summer Study Survey- Citizen

174	I agree with the current law that does not charge citizens for the inspection of public records. TN citizens already pay for the creation of public records by paying public governmental agencies through our tax dollars. TN citizens should not be charged for looking at records that they have already paid for through their tax dollars.	9/2/2015 7:36 PM
175	The document copy fees are not appropriate given many records are now electronic and could be provided via many channels without charge. Example emailing the documents. The law assumes the records custodian is a good faith actor and so extends immunity from damages for failing to comply with the law. Experience with officials demonstrates they are not always innocent good faith actors. Custodians game the system to frustrate public access. Thus the law should be amended to allow citizens to extract monetary damages, including punitive damages, from bad actors. The law failed to anticipate nor accommodate the move to electronic records. Thus the methods of inspection, collection, archiving, distribution, classification, indexing, and dissemination are not efficient nor effective. The law imposes unnecessary burdens upon the public custodians by failing to recognize the reality of modern record keeping and retrieval. Custodians, we must acknowledge, have no cost of producing records. The desire to label as "cost" those activities which are already build into the operation of agencies is flawed. The cost is zero to produce records for inspection or electronic reception. The only costs are those associated with improper or inefficient methods of the custodian. Those improper elements should never be shifted to those seeking to review documents. The law assumes as much when it bars recovery of damages. The trade-off is the assumption of efficient record keeping (including recovery or retrieval) and the presence of a knowledgeable custodian for whom the default position is assumed to be immediately compliant. Many other deficiencies and defects are now apparent in the application of the Open Records law. The Counsel should review the case log of disputes and produce a report of the sticking areas, problem areas, and custodial interference which has been documented over the many years of the Office of Open Records Counsel. Counsel Office should also produce best practices reports from other states with suggestions for custodian compliance improvement. The law fails to allow provisions to require custodians obtain educational training and professional development workshops to improve compliance. Likewise. the Counsel Office cannot require training to resolve ongoing non-compliance issues. This remedy should be available as a stick for the Counsel Office.	9/2/2015 7:03 PM
176	It doesn't cost .15/.50 to print out pages. Most agencies that ask for time totally make up unreasonable amounts specifically to keep media from accessing documents they don't want them to see - and that's assuming they even understand the law, because outside of the main metro areas, most officials are clueless. How about doing a better job enforcing the law that already exists instead of creating a bullshit obstruction that violate the constitution all y'all elected officials are sworn to uphold?	9/2/2015 6:37 PM
177	I think the current law allows the custodian of records to stall and make changes to the records. I have never been allowed to view a single page the day I ask to view the records. It is always several weeks to months before I am allowed to view the records. Not fair it gives the appearance the custodian is trying to hide something.	9/2/2015 6:36 PM
178	More access, transparency, less cost and delays. The computer information loopholes that pretty much give custodians the right to deny if they claim they cannot find them are manure. The DA's have far too much power in sealing records and this should be taken from them. The hurdle of requiring forms be filled out to inspect records for police and various agencies is silly in many cases and email requests should be honored, if they comply with the ORA requirements in all cases. The Open Records Counsel should be given the power to oversee binding arbitration and even sanction officials/departments/municipalities. I am thankful for all the help I have received from Ann Butterworth, Elisha Hodges and the Open Records Counsel.	9/2/2015 6:28 PM
179	All documents, including check registers, (excluding exempt information) should be placed on a website and kept on a website where we, the citizens, can go to find it and review it and download it. That information belongs to us. We should be able to see it any time we want. I would rather that we not charge for copies or inspections....period. This state had over \$700 million in waste, fraud and abuse last year. Open records and easy access can help us eliminate the waste. If government officials and employees always know that at any moment in time they could be found out if they are breaking the law, they will be that much more cautious with what they are doing and will likely avoid breaking the law....kind of like locks keeping honest people honest. I constantly have to wrestle with County Attorney Mike Jennings in order to get records. He violates my rights. He is rude and obnoxious and has called me names. However, I am not sure that I have ever submitted a request wherein I didn't find something that the County was doing wrong once I received the materials I had asked for and had a chance to review them. I believe I am batting a thousand. Why should I have to pay for any records when everything I ask for reveals that this county is operating improperly?	9/2/2015 6:13 PM
180	TDEC has a number of "dataviewers" which have application, permit, and enforcement documents available without the need for individual requests. Additional documents are posted or provided upon request by scans or electronic copies attached to email replies. I consider this a "best practice" for a state agency.	9/2/2015 6:01 PM
181	We already pay taxes and it was warranted for me to send in requests to investigate some details and to uncover more of the same and to evaluate how far reaching the issue really was. I found what I needed and I know there would have been more to find but it got too costly on my own pocket.	9/2/2015 5:15 PM

## Summer Study Survey- Citizen

182	Williamson County Schools made it as difficult, hurtful and humiliating as possible to review documents. The first day I attempted to review records I was told I would need to bring a note from my husband giving me permission to see documents related to my children. While I am not a biological parent , I am the primary custodial parent listed as parent one on the vast majority of school documents and for years I have been permitted to pick up my children from school without issue . Suddenly, when we were attempting to review records I needed his permission. Although they could've let me review documents on a laptop as I was promised , they did not. I could have simply saved it to a thumb drive because the records I requested were regarding my own family. However the district chose this to print them all and many were copied multiple times. I was monitored and repeatedly asked what specifically I was looking for. I was required to make a pile of all documents I had copied so that their "lawyers could be prepared". Two additional copies were made of selected items, one for me one for the administration /lawyers. When I brought someone to help with the review, although there were multiple tables in the room, we were directed to sit at the table with suspended microphones above it. There is reason to believe on at least one occasion the mics were left on. At the end of the 1st day Mike Looney walked out with bins containing copies related to myself and my son, my areas of greatest concern. Those bins disappeared. They were never found. Items concerning my own children were redacted in their entirety (really a blank page or completely blacked out) despite the fact that they were the focus of my request. The redactions were done in a completely arbitrary manner, and there seems to be evidence those hired to do the redactions were linked to groups hostile to my concerns. The district's efforts, aside from being a horrendous waste of money, required me to spend weeks doing what otherwise would have been done in days if not ours had they utilized available software and allowed me to review my documents electronically.	9/2/2015 4:51 PM
183	I am in favor of no charges for inspection of records and no per-hour inspection fees. I am concerned that these fees will prevent the media from accessing important records that should be made public. I believe our taxes currently pay for the staff needed to support these requests.	9/2/2015 4:51 PM
184	It is too easy for an organization to say a record is under investigation and prevent the release of that record.	9/2/2015 4:27 PM
185	Many public records are now electronic rather than paper copies. There should be no charge, or minimal charge, to obtain electronic copies which could even be emailed and sent without postage. Also, we know in our office that per page copy costs are b/w about .03 cents per page. The state has to have the copiers anyhow so it should only be charging marginal costs - not making a profit.	9/2/2015 4:26 PM
186	Government agencies typically fail to provide information concerning who to contact for submitting an open records request. It is also very difficult to get consistent answers concerning submission of requests, viewing costs, copies, fees etc. And these requests are rarely responded to in a timely manner.	9/2/2015 4:09 PM
187	I am a freelance writer. Records copies cost more than I am paid for a freelance article	9/2/2015 4:04 PM
188	copies online of at least listings are extremely valuable to those of us that are physically limited to family research. I have many Tennessee relation that I am looking for but due to lack of information I have not found. Heritage is important for all and copies of even COPIES would suffice!	9/2/2015 3:11 PM
189	I was not given an option for inspection only, when I went to ask for records I was told I had to purchase copies.	9/2/2015 2:10 PM
190	Question #11 above does not ask about "labor charges." The \$0.15 per page charge sounds reasonable, but experience has shown that labor charges are exorbitant and prevent citizens and media organizations from knowing how government agencies are performing and spending tax funds. Citizens should be able to examine (and pay only per page copying fees, NOT labor charges for copies) government records without charge. Gov't offices need to structure their budgets to accommodate this duty.	9/2/2015 12:54 PM
191	As a citizens action group higher fees mean less access.	9/1/2015 1:34 PM
192	We need an OORC public hearing in Memphis.	9/1/2015 12:37 PM
193	Open public records should be both open and accessible to all members of the public. Everyone cannot afford to pay to receive open records. Charging for open public records negates that process from being open and public. Moving forward with this plans will make this process inaccessible to many, and only open to some, which is unfair.	9/1/2015 12:10 PM
194	The ability to inspect records at no or low cost is important in able to maintain transparency in government operations.	9/1/2015 11:36 AM
195	It is hard enough to obtain information that helps us hold government officials and institutions accountable. In the past I had to personally pay \$50 for a copy of my IAB file, only to discover later that I could have inspected it for free, and requested a copy of the few pages I was actually interested in. This is unacceptable. The State wastes money on all sorts of things (Im thinking of that lame TN logo right now). Open records should be subsidized if need be. Accountability and transparency are too important. I cant even imagine the effect this will have on news information that is available for public consumption. I urge you to either make no changes or lower the fees charged for Open records. I would also like to see this survey better publicized and a public input hearing held in Memphis as well. We should not be left out of this decision making process. Thank you for your consideration. In Peace, Paul Garner	9/1/2015 11:34 AM
196	I should be allowed to search Public Records regarding personal genealogy, family records, deeds, Bill of Sale, etc. without fees. I understand the fees associated with copying materials.	8/31/2015 8:19 PM

## Summer Study Survey- Citizen

197	Our taxes pay to maintain the records for pubic inspection. Ideally, allowing individuals to scan/photograph records would save the gpvment time and money. Posting records on a public web site would be the best solution.	8/31/2015 9:53 AM
198	I'm a former Tennessean (Chester & Madison Co). I'm doing genealogy research in TN. (My tombstone is already in New Friendship Cemetery in Chester Co.)	8/30/2015 11:55 PM
199	We pay people to maintain and help, no need to change.	8/30/2015 8:43 PM
200	I believe that open records are an important part of government.	8/30/2015 8:00 PM
201	I do not believe charging for public records above the 0.15 cents per copy is correct and should not be allowed to pass the Legislation.	8/30/2015 5:26 PM
202	Public records are just that. Public. Should be accessible for free. Copy or search fees should be charged if the individual cannot perform the search themselves in person.	8/30/2015 11:10 AM
203	As a citizen of Tennessee and the USA, records should be open and visible without any question. There shouldn't be any delays in viewing or obtaining the records. I can understand minimal delay pulling from an archive, but otherwise, records should immediately be available for inspection. The government should work for the people and work to make obtaining, viewing, etc of records as easy as possible. This is a vital service to citizens and needs to remain as easy as possible without obstacles.	8/30/2015 7:51 AM
204	I do not feel it appropriate to charge to review records on a limited basis. I pay taxes to support these employees salaries.mi	8/30/2015 4:06 AM
205	I believe free access to public records is a critical part of a free society. I am strongly opposed to the idea of individuals or business needing to pay for such access. I understand possibly needing to pay of copies of records, but think the fee should cover the cost of the paper and copying and not the labor.	8/28/2015 9:17 PM
206	As a citizen, I am paying for the creation of these records and Have a legal right to access them. If legislators feel they have to hide their acts, they should resign.	8/27/2015 2:09 PM
207	I have been on the Board of Education for many years. The first Director/Superintendent was very accomodating concerning records and information requests to help board members make informed decisions. Another Director didn't like to accomodate certain requests for information if she didn't want you to have it. It was under her leadership that the Board voted to make it more difficult for some board members to get requested public records to make informed decisions. I believe that charging for time and copies of public records is a deterrent to make it more difficult for the public to have access to the very public records they can use to stay informed, and help hold our Government officials accountable for their actions. Having to make a written request, then potentially have to wait seven days to get the information was a deterrent for me. There should be easy access to public records. Surely we can use the taxpayers money for something that actually accomodates them, and in my case make it easier to obtain the information I need to make informed decisions. I would like to reinterate, I believe that making it harder to obtain public records is an intentional way to deter people from asking for it.	8/26/2015 11:33 PM
208	As a citizen of Tennessee I should not be charged anything for records, unless it is in a matter with a legal problem, or media matter then a fee is quite alright.	8/26/2015 11:37 AM
209	My records requirements do not typically involve extremely lengthy documents, and agencies' responses typically are in the form of sending digital documents via email with no actual print production on the agency's side, to my knowledge. My requests do not typically involve (e.g.) voluminous longitudinal data that is vital to journalists' investigative reporting. I'm taking this opportunity to urge that the State consider as soon as possible requiring that all state-government information-technology and software-development procurement processes include a requirement that agencies direct vendors to provide estimates of any incremental costs that might be associated with ensuring that documents, data, etc., produced using the procured goods and services can, with proper governance, security and permissions, be readily accessed by agencies and/or directly by citizens via decentralized IT infrastructure, software and user interfaces, thereby potentially averting many costs and controversies. Please let me know if you'd like to discuss this further. Milt Capps, journalist (not a technologist)	8/26/2015 9:30 AM
210	Public records need to be available to all at no charge. It's the only way the public can be properly informed without being denied access to information. For a democracy, free flow of information is crucial.	8/26/2015 9:12 AM
211	If anything, access to public records should be made easier. Transparency in government is essential to the preservation of our republic. (Democracy under the Rule of Law)	8/26/2015 8:21 AM
212	Public records belong to the public. The proposed legislation changing the law to require a fee merely to inspect public records will unnecessarily hinder and obstruct the public's access to fundamental records such as tax assessments, routine property records, etc.; will hinder, obstruct and have a chilling effect on the public's ability to remain aware of government operations; will hinder and obstruct the public's right to oversight of government operations; and therefore will reduce/hinder/obstruct transparency in government operations. This legislation is shameful, ill conceived, and should never have seen the light of day. It is bad governance, period.	8/25/2015 6:09 PM

## Summer Study Survey- Citizen

213	Tax payers and voters in TN need transparency. The government should not withhold records nor charge fees that would prevent voters from investigating and educating themselves regarding all government al actions.	8/25/2015 4:05 PM
214	Tennessee law should never allow for fees to be charged for the inspection of records. They are our records and we have paid for them. I want to continue to live in an open and democratic society.	8/25/2015 3:10 PM
215	I do not feel anyone should have to pay to inspect open records. Charging for records inspections creates a barrier for the everyday citizen. Free records inspections keep a good level of transparency and also ensures access to citizens interested inspecting the records.	8/25/2015 11:52 AM
216	THIS IS A REALLY AWFUL PROPOSAL	8/25/2015 10:33 AM
217	Inspecting public records should always be free.	8/24/2015 5:58 PM
218	This survey appears to be designed for people who represent organizations rather than citizens interested in the issue and therefore was essentially irrelevant to me. I strongly believe that people or representatives of organizations should not be charged for reviewing records.	8/24/2015 1:50 PM
219	Public records should be available to any citizen of the state of Tennessee at a fee that is within the budget of any Tennessean. Attempts by anyone, lawmakers or otherwise, to restrict access to public records in any way shape or form raise many red flags. What are the people who are trying so hard to restrict public records trying to hide? As taxpayers, citizens should have unrestricted access to all public records.	8/24/2015 10:15 AM
220	The city of Memphis and the Shelby county school system does not allow citizens access during business unless they have an appointment and then they refuse to grant an appointment. This is in violation of the law. they should provide electronic data when available in excel or word or pdf at no charge. they should not charge for access to data. The taxpayers paid for all this data and should have full access to it except that which is restricted by law.	8/23/2015 10:46 AM
221	Inspection is one thing, but to charge for it is tying up our freedom of information. Duplication charges are reasonable and should reflect actual costs. Office holders should not be paid extra for what they are already supposed to do.	8/21/2015 5:12 PM
222	The purpose of a government entity is to provide services to the people it serves; free and open access to ALL records is necessary to provide transparency of government. It is a part of the cost of government.	8/21/2015 8:40 AM
223	Charge for copies - yes. Charge for visual inspection - no.	8/20/2015 6:56 PM
224	I believe the law is fine as it is, with the exception of a high cost for color copies. I believe that the name "Public Records" means just that, free access to all without a charge and should stay that way.	8/20/2015 12:12 PM
225	The simple inspection of public records should not place a financial burden on any member of the public seeking information about their government.	8/20/2015 12:02 PM
226	I speak only for myself — not WPLN or any other organization — but I find the state's current policy reasonable. I might argue that printing costs are actually lower now than they once were, but since most agencies usually deliver records to me electronically, I rarely incur this charge.	8/20/2015 10:40 AM
227	Citizens should not be charged for legitimate requests for access to or copies of public records. Persons charged with keeping the records, whether elected or hired, are public servants who are paid by taxpayers. However, if significant number of requests are not followed-up by persons requesting records, then state should impose convenience fee for only those instances. Why should taxpayers be subjected to double jeopardy, i.e., pay for salaries through taxes and pay for access to records!	8/20/2015 9:22 AM
228	I am your average citizen. My only dealings with public records have been with a few counties local register of deed. I am strongly opposed to charging fees simply for the inspection of what already exists. The government is set-up to serve the people, and the people help keep the government accountable. This proposed measure weakens the power of the people to hold our elected officials and the bureaucracy responsible for their actions. One might argue that too much time is spent within the government to organize their records for public inspection, and that charging fees will cut down on time wasted and offset the resources needed to allow public viewing. I find this argument acceptable if it were in the private sector, but this is our government, part of the service the government offers is supposed to be transparency. Transparency is required for the government to be accountable. The main point is: Yes, transparency costs money on an ongoing basis, but in the long run it saves money by preventing corruption and scandal that lurks in a world where you have to pay to access information.	8/20/2015 8:27 AM
229	Charging for access is wrong.	8/20/2015 7:30 AM
230	Current law is fine. But records are not really open, if there is a fee just to look at them. Many places charge \$0.25 per page for black & white letter size copies. You might think about this small increase.	8/20/2015 5:40 AM
231	As a citizen I should have the right to inspect any and all public records. I agree with the need to charge for copies of public records that I desire but sharply disagree with the idea of charging for inspections of these records.	8/19/2015 11:18 PM

## Summer Study Survey- Citizen

232	I feel that our tax dollars have already paid for citizens to have access to public records. After all these are considered public records...citizens should not be charged to inspect/view public records. I feel that would violate our rights to enable public monitoring of their government.	8/19/2015 6:42 AM
233	Reading/viewing public records should be Free. Public records should always be available to be read for free as they are Public records. I have no problem charging for copies of same records as that is an expense that only comes about when copies are requested.	8/18/2015 5:06 PM
234	Most citizens of the state pay property and sales taxes which pays for the maintenance and storage. "Secrecy is the devil's handmaiden"	8/18/2015 1:19 PM
235	Even though I may not request records, it is important to me as a citizen, that government remain open to the public, open to scrutiny and open to free inspection.	8/18/2015 12:35 PM
236	We the citizens pay taxes but to pay a small charge for a copy is appropriate. It is not appropriate to pay for the service to inspection of public records. When there is a fee to inspect public records the cost could bar some members of the public from reviewing of the records. The citizen would be barred from collecting information that could help the citizen limit the government's over reach.	8/18/2015 9:54 AM
237	I've never made a request but from reading about others and hearing friends talk, it appears that most requests come from the media and are primarily "fishing" expeditions. It's seems to me that any request has value based on the depth of the information requested. Government employees, though not known for their high efficiency, still have to gather the information, taking them from their jobs. I believe that any and all costs associated with fulfilling a request should be charged to the one making the request, even if it's just labor. Otherwise the rest of us are subsidizing the cost of a few. That doesn't seem fair to me.	8/18/2015 6:37 AM
238	Our government should be of the people, for the people, and by the people. No one should be requiring fees for the records of our government.	8/17/2015 7:03 PM
239	"Public" records should be open and available for the public to access as needed. Fundamental American rights should not be altered if we are to remain a democratic society.	8/17/2015 4:43 PM
240	The government must not create fees that will hinder average citizens from accessing public records. Get necessary funds somewhere else or cut costs as our families have done.	8/17/2015 2:38 PM
241	People on bond and in jail that have been deemed indigent should be allowed to receive copies free.	8/17/2015 2:03 PM
242	The records in question are public records. Therefore, I believe that the public has every right to inspect them at no cost.	8/17/2015 12:34 PM
243	Charging for access and reading of public records undermines the freedom of information act. While the current practice of charging for hard copies of this information are justified to offset the cost of paper and ink, charging for a general review of public records goes against set laws that are covered under the freedom of information act.	8/17/2015 12:08 PM
244	Public records should be available for public inspection for free, copies should be available for a reasonable cost.	8/17/2015 11:51 AM
245	Citizens should NOT be charged to inspect/view public documents. In fact, they should all be on the internet and free of charge to view, download or print.	8/17/2015 10:26 AM
246	My main concern is the General Assembly's disregard for allowing the public and the press access to public records. It is essential to government transparency. Tennessee's Sunshine Law is a model for the rest of the nation. It needs to be strengthened, not weakened.	8/17/2015 10:20 AM
247	Taxpayers already own the records; there should be no charge for digital copies.	8/17/2015 9:10 AM
248	I'm against charging for inspection of open public records.	8/17/2015 9:02 AM
249	My family roots in Tennessee date back to the mid 1790s, before Tennessee became a state. I have learned this information from historic documents that have been preserved in several Tennessee counties. But there are many more documents that I am missing and would love to have access to. Unfortunately many of these documents are not currently available online or easily available. I do not live in Tennessee but I have worked with local researchers in the past and have relied on county officials for research assistance. These are public records. There should not be a charge to inspect public documents. The State should be doing more to make these records freely available for online search. Perhaps partner with organizations that want to help make these records available. This will help preserve the history of the state and allow those who do not live in the state or people who cannot travel to the archives to have equal access. Please reconsider restrictive records laws, and think about how making these records open and available will not only spur the preservation and use of these documents but demonstrate the State's commitment to its cultural heritage and history. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.	8/17/2015 8:51 AM
250	Public records should be just that...records for the public. This is a form of transparency that keeps those in the public eye in check. It helps make sure our tax dollars are not being wasted. It helps ensure elected officials are doing their jobs. To make this information more difficult to obtain would be a disservice to everyone in every community.	8/17/2015 7:00 AM

## Summer Study Survey- Citizen

251	I think the records inspections should remain free. Individuals who are impoverished would be at a disadvantage.	8/16/2015 10:02 PM
252	As a genealogical researcher, access to documents is very important. Usually, most of my requests require no help or input from government officials, if there are open stacks. Otherwise, all input is simply fetching vault items for me. Copy costs I believe should cover the costs of the copying, including equipment replacement and archival treatment of original records, at whatever level that requires. I am very concerned with charging for "inspection", especially deeds. Frequently I'm just trying to find out where owned land was, or to chase a deed back to see if it proves a familial link or not - I can't afford to buy copies for every false end I search, ever. I don't mind at all to pay for actual copies retrieved, but sometimes it takes a lot of digging, and unless govt officials are going to dig FOR me, I shouldn't have to pay to dig.	8/16/2015 9:51 PM
253	There should be FREE access BY ALL to ALL public records as a constitutional right and a principle of an OPEN Democracy; and not a privilege or at the whim of someone "in charge" of those PUBLIC records. Digitization of all public records would accomplish what all parties want except those who are afraid of the public's oversight and scrutiny. Costs of our government are now borne by the public not government, as would the costs of digitization. Thank you, Robert I. Niles M.D.	8/16/2015 10:01 AM
254	Please don't change the law.	8/16/2015 5:56 AM
255	Citizens of this state should be able to view all records, free of charge. Our taxes should be more than enough to cover the expense	8/15/2015 9:57 PM
256	Since the Government of the state is there to serve the people of the state, no citizen should be charged for access to those records that provide information they may want or need to view.	8/15/2015 9:09 PM
257	The estimates are based on personal use rather than NGS' members use. I am generally concerned with availability of materials which are generally housed in county archives; however, some newer records are sometimes needed. I have no problems with charges for photocopies; however, public records should be available for inspection without charge. To charge for such a use violates their openness.	8/15/2015 8:20 PM
258	Inspecting public records should not require payment. If you want a copy of that record, then charging a fee for that copy is acceptable and reasonable. Charging the public to inspect public records is not reasonable nor acceptable.	8/15/2015 6:36 PM
259	As a genealogist the current fees are appropriate and any increase may prohibit some people from being able to document their heritage.	8/15/2015 3:58 PM
260	I believe that all public records should remain open to the public without a fee for inspection.	8/15/2015 12:23 PM
261	Although I have not queried public records to date, I believe "public records" is self-explanatory. These records must be open and available for viewing on-line.	8/15/2015 9:31 AM
262	Those rates are higher than Kinko's. Also, perhaps they are ok for a few pages, but, for large requests there should be a hefty discount, or, a cut off amount.	8/15/2015 9:01 AM
263	As a citizen I believe that any change to the open records law or increasing the cost is a disservice to the citizens of this state and is an insult by State Government to the people.	8/15/2015 8:37 AM
264	As a citizen, I have requested to view public records of a local municipality. On occasion, the records were either denied, declared to be non-existent, were incomplete or my requests were ignored. It is my impression that some small local governmental entities are reluctant to provide this information because they are not accustomed to someone seeking written information.	8/15/2015 8:10 AM
265	The more open government the better. As long as there's no abuse, this citizen/taxpayer oversight should be 100% free.	8/15/2015 7:03 AM
266	Taxes already pay for public workers time. The only fees that are justified are the cost of a sheet of paper and toner.	8/15/2015 6:51 AM
267	The current law allows censorship of information lending to organized crime. We have been prevented from information due to time necessary for inspection because copy cost could not be arranged due to demand for payment in form other than cash. This idea seems bent on disadvantaging low-income families and the poor. Is this Big Bob Corkers idea, seems like it. I would be interested to know what Ann Butterworth thinks about it. Of course I'm still waiting for her to return my phone call from 4 weeks ago. Obviously Ann and Cleveland Grimes of the WWTA feel above average citizens and find it unnecessary to respond to inquires.	8/15/2015 12:28 AM
268	This would hinder the average citizen from inspecting state records because of the charges. I can't even begin to say how wrong this is. I just feel like someone is trying to hide something by discouraging open, no fee records.	8/14/2015 9:17 PM
269	I just want to be clear that existing information found online at various county websites for free will not go behind a "paywall" under this legislation. That includes public property, court, tax, marriage and other records.	8/14/2015 8:48 PM

## Summer Study Survey- Citizen

270	An explanation of why this legislation was introduced would be beneficial to citizens. From your survey it seems that possibly records are being copied and not picked up. If so, then why not collect a duplicating fee in advance. To charge to "view" a record is absurd. I've never requested to view a public record personally but an attorney hired by my family has done so on our behalf. As a citizen I am absolutely against charging to "view" public records. A nominal fee paid prior to duplicating public records is reasonable and fair to citizens.	8/14/2015 8:47 PM
271	The TPRA was enacted for this reason, and someone already gets paid for performing this duty, it isn't like they are doing it for free... therefore, citizens are paying for the service already.	8/14/2015 8:31 PM
272	I do not think that residents of the State of Tennessee should have to pay a fee to view public records. The fees that we paid when the record was generated should cover any cost associated with residents wanting to view the records. If the State feels the need to collect the information, then residents should have the right to view the record free of additional fees.	8/14/2015 8:13 PM
273	We should be able to inspect with no fee. Only a fee for copying....and color copying fee is a little high.	8/14/2015 7:02 PM
274	NO FEES for PUBLIC RECORDS. Paying for Copies, OK. NO, WE SHOULD NOT HAVE TO PAY FOR RESEARCH AND VIEWING ONLY! Paying for copies is just fine. Yes, it takes time for the employee to look up the file and such. That's part of her job description, isn't it? Again, don't break our trust by trying to fleece us for more money. Especially when you could go a long way in BALANCING your own budget. Then, this would not be an issue. The survey questions are BUNK! The questions are not geared for INDIVIDUALS that need access to county records, plats, general research, etc. Individuals that are NOT part of organizations using the public records office to make money. If you want to charge THEM, fine, but good luck differentiating a "Normal" citizen from a business person. They are called PUBLIC records for a reason. We already pay our taxes into the system for these services. I say again: NO, WE SHOULD NOT HAVE TO PAY FOR RESEARCH AND VIEWING ONLY! Paying for copies is just fine. I have paid for copies and will continue to do so, this is fair. But to access records that are supposed to be public. NO WAY. Our federal government does not do this. Nor should the state!	8/14/2015 5:44 PM
275	While charging a reasonable copying fee is fair, charging a fee to only examine records is not. No Tennessean should have to pay to examine public records.	8/14/2015 4:00 PM
276	depending on the volume of pages, even fifteen cents can be an impediment.	8/14/2015 2:51 PM
277	Beacon believes the current law is sufficient in most respects. However, we do have concerns that the labor cost rule is susceptible to abuse by government officials, since they are not required by law to provide a detailed explanation of those charges. Beacon also believes strongly that the inspection of records must remain free of charge. Free inspection is often the only way indigent and low-income citizens can access public records. Allowing governments to charge for inspection of records would severely weaken and undermine the Open Records Act.	8/14/2015 2:42 PM
278	It mostly works but at times we run into roadblocks by public officials charged with keeping records. Paying for copies is appropriate. A change to paying to view is not appropriate since public records should always be open to anyone to view and inspect.	8/14/2015 2:06 PM
279	Public records are just that, for the public. To charge isn't right. To reduce copy costs, you could provide the option to receive them electronically when asked for. If documents are not already readily available, then they should be with the Paper Reduction Act. As they are scanned they will then be part of a database for future use if requested again.	8/14/2015 1:35 PM
280	My concern is if the pricing goes up, I will no longer be able to do my research.	8/14/2015 12:30 PM
281	Everyone should have the right to inspect public records regardless of economic status. This cost, however small, is an unnecessary tax on the people who are already struggling to make ends meet. Just another example of how the 1% is owning the government.	8/14/2015 12:26 PM
282	I am for all records dealing with tax payers money to be open. no matter what dept. city, county or state. also organizations.	8/14/2015 12:00 PM
283	Public record inspection is a legal right. Charging to inspect records would make these records less available to citizens with lower incomes. Changing this will likely result in a lawsuit on behalf of low-income Tennesseans being filed by the large-volume users to overturn the fee structure. This is a foreseeable outcome and to fail to address a foreseeable problem is foolhardy.	8/14/2015 11:17 AM
284	a lot of what I need is on line and can personally print . If you do raise the fee, it needs to stay reasonable. Where does the money go now? and where will it go later? Are we talking about paying for the inspector or the copies? I feel the inspectors get paid by the taxpayers already. If you want to increase slightly the copies, I might be for that.	8/14/2015 10:56 AM
285	by the people for the people... if you put a price on information, it limits who has access ....	8/14/2015 10:53 AM

## Summer Study Survey- Citizen

286	Working for an organization that is effected by the open records request people that request open records do not realize the man hours require to pull records for them. This is a waste of taxpayer dollars when these records are requested not only in time but also in resources. Man hours should be included in the cost of any open record request including up to salaries and benefits. People making these request need to realize that they are taking people away from the job that the taxpayers are paying them to do to pull records.	8/14/2015 10:53 AM
287	I am perfectly fine with government charging fair and reasonable fees for physical copies of public records. However, if you start charging people to inspect the records you start limiting the public's access to what is supposed to be public records. Then it's only a matter of time before the price further limits access resulting in those who DO NOT have access and those who have the privilege of access. Anyone should be able to view "Public" records at anytime without limitation and without monetary costs. That said I believe costs for copies should be higher to compensate for any perceived costs associated with accessing records or making duplication.	8/14/2015 10:13 AM
288	There should not be a charge just for looking at the records! Copies are reasonable, for the cost of printing. But, it is not reasonable to charge to inspect the records that we, as citizens, have a right to look at.	8/14/2015 10:03 AM
289	I believe the only reasonable basis for charging a citizen for any type of public records is to cover direct costs. The per page fee for copying is obviously designed to cover the direct costs and is reasonable. Charging to inspect records is not reasonable. Taxpayers are already paying for the time of the government employees involved as well as the document storage systems and all other aspects of record keeping. The public's right to inspect records, from taxpayer funded offices, during normal office hours should not be restricted due to unreasonable fees for a simple inspection. Unless there is a direct cost for materials, there should be no charge whatsoever.	8/14/2015 9:50 AM
290	There should be no charge for people to inspect records.I understand the charge for copies is to help absorb the cost but for someone to simply view the records is not adding cost to the state. There could be some people that can not afford to pay these charges which would make it private access now and no longer public. Just not the right thing to do.	8/14/2015 9:28 AM
291	The current law is fine. A small fee for copies seems appropriate, however, charging the public to view records that belong to the public seems more than wrong, it seems absurd. Could a tenant charge a landlord for inspecting property owned by the landlord? The custodians of records are holding property that is owned by the public.	8/14/2015 9:21 AM
292	I understand that not all TN citizens have need or use of public records, and by large only a very small percentage of folks access public records on an ongoing basis. To charge additional fees is reasonable, "if" the cost of management of these documents reduces the budget needs for that office. To add additional revenues without a reduction somewhere else, then i would say absolutely a resounding NO..	8/14/2015 8:56 AM
293	I do not have to have been making requests myself or be in a group to believe that public records should be freely accessible to the public!	8/14/2015 8:40 AM
294	We already pay for these records as taxpayers ---they should be free or very cheap.	8/14/2015 8:24 AM
295	Charges for volunteers can be prohibitive, but often inspection requires traveling long distances during business hours. More digital access to records would alleviate many access problems.	8/14/2015 8:05 AM
296	NO FEES FOR INSPECTION. Fees for copying should cover actual, audited cost to copy- including zero fees for copies made at zero cost to government (eg, photographing record by a citizen)	8/14/2015 8:02 AM
297	This should be a free service to anyone, period.	8/14/2015 7:46 AM
298	I OPPOSE the imposition of any charge to view public records. Charging would make public records far less accessible to many people. Our taxes pay for the creation and maintenance of public records. Citizens and the press should definitely NOT have to pay again to see them. Making copies is another matter; an appropriate charge is warranted. But, there should be NO charge to simply view public records.	8/14/2015 7:31 AM
299	this is one example in past years that happened to me at the roane county court house at the clerks office. i was asking for copies of a transcript in a murder trial and was told i could leave cash money in a envelope with the clerk but they could not give me a receipt for it, i declined to do so and went straight to the sheriffs office to report it.	8/14/2015 6:51 AM
300	Public records should be free for inspection by the public. Paying for copies is appropriate to offset the cost of supplies and labor. I personally get the utmost cooperation with respect to records review at TDEC and country courthouse officials all across the state.	8/14/2015 5:59 AM
301	Inspection should always be free. Docs are not owned, but kept or filed. The fees should remain the same.	8/14/2015 5:15 AM

## Summer Study Survey- Citizen

302	My first comment is that you asked for "citizen" comment then you turned the survey into some misleading and confusing debacle of mystic proportion. As a "citizen" I feel I should have the right to call/ come in and inspect any "public" document I desire. I am tired of government services being moved into fee services because said government wants to spend my tax dollars elsewhere and charge me for it again. That being said...if you did a survey on how many actual "citizens" make an actual request for information, I feel it would be less than 10%. Hence the other 90% would be fee charging employees of some form of business. I feel this is the area which requests the most inquiries and generates the most "work". So why don't you request a "fee" from the actual people who use the system the most instead of just pawning the cost onto the average taxpayer who, until now had a legal right to inspect open public records. And to be honest, I think the whole survey is misleading and poorly stated to confuse and distract, if not to even extract information about who is actually responding. In summation, I think the law is just fine the way it is and would appreciate whomever decided it was a good idea, to think a little harder next time they want to generate additional cash flow for the government.	8/14/2015 1:00 AM
303	Current law is fine. If you begin charging for inspection of open public records, then they are no longer open. It is a measure to limit transparency in government, and it should not pass.	8/13/2015 8:06 PM
304	Public records were created using our tax dollars and belong to the public. It is part of the duties of public officials to make our public records available in a timely and inexpensive manner.	8/13/2015 5:16 PM
305	We pay the salaries of the public servants and entities and we should have a right to inspect any public servants work to hold them accountable. Making a charge to view records equals an additional punitive tax when we seek to oversee the work of our public servants. It is also a slippery slope where costs will keep people of lesser means from having access to government records. I believe it is fundamentally wrong.	8/13/2015 3:18 PM
306	It seems feasible to just have all public documents online and accessible.	8/13/2015 2:10 PM
307	I think things should be placed online	8/13/2015 2:05 PM
308	some times the documents and material that is requested are delayed and it takes more than 7 days to review them.	8/13/2015 11:59 AM
309	As public records, it is a foregone conclusion that they are the property of the taxpayers, property for which the maintenance is already paid by our tax monies, including our inspection.	8/13/2015 10:45 AM
310	Tennessee already restricts its open records laws to state residents. These people, therefore, are already paying taxes to support the state and local governments. Government is not fulfilling a favor by providing access to public records, through either copies or the right to inspect — it is fulfilling its obligation, one that recognizes they work for the public.	8/13/2015 10:43 AM
311	The "people" are already paying the custodians of public records and the "people," including reporters, should be charged minimal amounts for accessing what is really their information. No changes should be made to hinder this access.	8/13/2015 10:42 AM
312	These offices are part of a democratic system that is based on knowledge and openness. Charging to inspect records undermines our system and our freedoms.	8/13/2015 10:28 AM

## Summer Study Survey- Citizen

313	<p>As a citizen and an attorney, I believe that there should be fewer restrictions on public records access. The government is there to serve its public, and allowing access to its records allows for accountability. I request records often on behalf of my clients. I handle a lot of consumer protection matters, and these records are vital to my cases. Case costs are ultimately borne by my clients, members of the general public. I have requested public records from other states, and it has been much easier to deal with. For instance, Texas does not charge for copies that are transmitted electronically. All I have to do is send an e-mail to the records custodian, and they send me the requested records back--usually on the same day. In Tennessee, I submit a request, it is answered with a denial or a statement of the need for more time on the very last day that it is due (if at all). Even if I e-mail the request, the department's attorney, rather than the records custodian, sends a response via e-mail and USPS, a waste of money and time. Every four weeks, I get an update regarding the time needed to respond, again via e-mail and USPS. If I finally ever get a response, there are roadblocks to ever obtaining the records, like "I don't think I can e-mail them;" "I have to redact these court records;" "If I produce them digitally, I still have to charge you for copies. I'll put them on a disk and charge you for shipping." The list goes on and on. Your employees, especially designated records custodians, need training to handle these requests without having to send every request to the legal department. There is no reason for that. They also need to learn that the labor fees are there to avoid spending excess government time on responding to requests when it takes away from normal job duties. When the person's only job is to respond to these requests, then the government has budgeted for their salary, and there is no reason for there to be a fee to get them to do their job. They need to understand that the fee for copies is meant to recoup the actual cost that the government spends on the copies. \$.15 is an estimate of the cost of the paper and ink/toner per page (excessive in my opinion), which is why the fee is charged. Digital copies do not require the government to produce paper or ink/toner, so no per page fee should be charged. I have been charged a per-page fee for digital copies because the person said that she was trying not to charge me her hourly rate. So, as an accommodation, she charged me the copy fee but refused to even tell me how long she spent on the production. I have had an employee at the Department of Revenue tell me that she needed a court order to expedite my request for a supplement to records I had already requested, paid for, and received. There is absolutely no reason to charge a fee for inspection of records, aside from limiting the public's access to your records. Your salaries are paid by taxpayer dollars, and you are there to serve your citizens. Rather than collecting fees to do your job from citizens who demand transparency, why don't you collect some taxes from the large corporations that run this state? It would be far more effective and just. I have a question for you—how much money have you actually spent on preparing records for inspection that were not inspected? If it is any substantial amount, you need to figure out why it would take that long for your employees to modify your records before they are ready for the public to view them. If it is a minimal amount, I wonder why you would even spend the time, money, and effort to push this legislation. I only have to ponder it briefly, reminding myself that I live in the state that thought, "Forget the public welfare. Forget poverty, corruption, education, and justice. Let's draft some legislation making the Bible our official state book."</p>	8/13/2015 10:18 AM
314	<p>Charging for public records seems to be in complete opposition to the notion of "public records" and could put off individuals with limited resources from exercising their legal right to view those records.</p>	8/13/2015 10:08 AM
315	<p>Open records are a right that the public has to oversee the government's work. It would be wrong to charge to view these and I encourage the lowering of fees for copies.</p>	8/13/2015 9:37 AM
316	<p>It already costs a lot of money to obtain government records, whether by inspection or copying. And when citizens try to save money by inspecting and bringing a device to make a copy or take a photo, they aren't permitted to do so. Public records should be "public"; this isn't workable when a large portion of the residents can't afford to pay to view them.</p>	8/13/2015 9:17 AM
317	<p>Put all government public records online. Citizens can then pick and choose what records they want and pay accordingly</p>	8/13/2015 9:08 AM
318	<p>A lot of Public employees currently violate the Open Records Law, there needs to be more teeth in sanctions for violation. A lot of Public employees are not familiar with the open records laws. Most of my requests are for deeds, wills and court files. A lot of the elected officials don't comply with the law</p>	8/13/2015 6:48 AM
319	<p>There should be NO change to the current state law.</p>	8/13/2015 6:46 AM
320	<p>I have requested email records from a member of the Advisory Committee Don Long from the city of Hendersonville. On multiple occasions I was denied because Mr. Long is using a private email address of DonLong.hville@gmail.com to conduct government business and avoid the open records act.</p>	8/13/2015 1:31 AM
321	<p>most documents can and should be made available digitally.</p>	8/12/2015 8:43 PM
322	<p>Individuals doing historical or geneological research cannot afford to pay much more. And if you are considering raising fees then individuals should be allowed to take their own photographs of documents when a physical record exists. After all it is public record and the public should not be denied the information because of costs.</p>	8/12/2015 8:33 PM
323	<p>I also work at a place where public records requests by two individuals are absolutely affecting our ability to do our job.</p>	8/12/2015 8:28 PM

## Summer Study Survey- Citizen

324	I find a general reluctance on the part of public officials to easily enable folk to look at or retrieve public records. It is my impression that the effort to charge for review of records is a blatant attempt to obstruct citizens from reviewing records. Let's face it, in today's arena there is probably much that politicians worry about because so many are corrupt. It is little wonder that they wish to protect themselves from access.	8/12/2015 8:26 PM
325	While inspection is generally allowed free of charge, if I want to inspect then scan the records using my own equipment the public entities usually want to charge me the per page rate the same as if I was getting actual copies even though it costs them nothing and the labor associated with gathering the records for inspection was already performed. This makes no sense and the law is vague about whether they can do this.	8/12/2015 7:54 PM
326	Public records are already difficult enough to get, despite the law. Creating a possible dispute over fees will only make this worse.	8/12/2015 7:34 PM
327	Inspection by a citizen should be free and a minimal charge should be made for copies of documents.	8/12/2015 6:17 PM
328	Citizens should not be charged for inspection of open public records. This change to the current law will be another way to make it more difficult for citizens of Tennessee to access open public records.	8/12/2015 5:56 PM
329	Any citizen should be allowed to examine public records without charge	8/12/2015 5:18 PM
330	Make records available electronically and their is little or no cost.	8/12/2015 5:02 PM
331	There should be no charge for inspecting records. They are not "open" if one has to pay to see them.	8/12/2015 4:35 PM
332	Inspection should remain free. Charge only for duplication.	8/12/2015 2:49 PM
333	Public records, viewed either in person by the general public or via media coverage, foster an informed and involved population. Charging for copies of records is certainly reasonable, given the cost of paper and ink necessary for production. Charging for merely viewing records, however, places one more obstacle and burden in the way of ordinary citizens' right to access what is supposed to be public information.	8/12/2015 2:34 PM
334	As a citizen, I made a several records requests from an elected officials office and to this day they have not complied with the request. It was said I could sue if I wanted the records.	8/12/2015 2:19 PM
335	There are already challenges with initial response times from government agencies. Most of the time there is an improper reaponse within the law. If the law changes to require a charge per inspection/document, the system will be abused by government entities even more. Documents will be held for hostage based on the number of documents and cost of viewing vs copying.	8/12/2015 1:52 PM
336	It reasonable to charge a small fee for copying records, but it is unreasonable and undemocratic to charge simply to review open records.	8/12/2015 1:43 PM
337	One of our major concerns is that the law is applied differently across the board. Often times, agencies will use fees and or staff time as a reason to push back and not provide access. They will also quickly send an acknowledgment within 7 business days, but take several weeks, or even months to fulfill the request. We also run into agencies that want our staffers to turn over their driver's license as part of the request.	8/12/2015 12:58 PM
338	Most of the records clerks (with the exception of the city police clerk) in our area are helpful and open to allow our newspaper to view records at any time. I'm not sure how other citizens are treated. To me, it's an insult to citizens to refuse access to inspect records when we as citizens actually own those records and pay the salaries of the employees with our tax dollars. It may be reasonable to charge for copies if the number is excessive, but for a document that has just a page or two, I don't see the need to charge for it. Again, who's paying for the copier, the paper, and the employee's salary anyway? Open records are vital to the preservation of democracy. Charging for the mere inspection of them starts our state and governments down a slippery slope, in my opinion.	8/12/2015 12:22 PM
339	Because media outlets provide information to the general public they should not be charged for copies.	8/12/2015 12:03 PM