



State of California

# LITTLE HOOVER COMMISSION

March 2, 2016

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*Executive Director*

The Honorable Eric Linder  
Assemblymember, California State Assembly  
State Capitol, Room 2016  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SUPPORT FOR ASSEMBLY BILL 2636**

Dear Assemblymember Linder:

The Little Hoover Commission supports Assembly Bill 2636, the measure you have authored that would authorize the State Registrar, local registrar or county recorder to accept electronic requests for certified copies of vital records without an accompanying notarized statement regarding the requester's identity and allow Californians to complete requests for these records online.

In its 2015 report, *A Customer-Centric Upgrade for California Government*, the Commission urged state leaders to upgrade and improve state government by sharply focusing on customer needs. The Commission found that, for various reasons, the state does not always make it easy or convenient for Californians to get the government services they are entitled to and deserve. Yet, by becoming more customer focused, the Commission suggested the state could dramatically change the nature of its interactions with Californians, begin to better meet their expectations and ultimately improve the public's trust and confidence in government.

The Commission's report identified opportunities for improved customer experience across state government, including its vital records program. Certified copies of vital records, such as birth, death and marriage certificates, are critical for Californians who want to enroll their children in school or a youth sports program, apply for a driver's license or a passport, update their Social Security card to reflect their new married name, or even help settle the affairs of a deceased loved one. While the need for copies of these records is often urgent, the Commission found that the process to obtain them can be overly complicated, time consuming and paper-intensive. To make it easier for Californians to apply for and receive copies of these records, the Commission suggested the state move the application and payment processes online and evaluate whether a notary check is necessary.

In its report, the Commission also urged the state to specifically improve services for the most vulnerable, who can least afford to spend time and resources interacting with government. Because Assembly Bill 2636 would help streamline the process to apply for and obtain certified copies of vital records and reduce costs, the Commission supports this measure.

As the bill moves through the legislative process, I will be writing letters on behalf of the Commission to legislators urging aye votes. If you have any questions, or if I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Carole D'Elia  
Executive Director

c: Commissioners, Little Hoover Commission