

My submission on the Provisions of Records Bill 2019.

Introduction.

My name is Elizabeth Coppin. I am a survivor of many Institutions in Ireland.

I was born in the County Home in Killarney on 21st May 1949. I was placed in

Pembroke Alms Industrial School, Tralee, County Kerry, sent by the Courts,

age 2yrs and 3 Mths.

On March 19th 1964, age 14yrs and 10mths, the Mercy Nuns and the Education Department,

sent me to the Magdalene Laundry in Cork. (magdalene laundry number 1).

I ran away from this laundry, and the ISPCC took me back to another Magdalene Laundry, in Cork.

(magdalene laundry 2). some time later I was transferred to a Magdalene Laundry in Waterford.

(magdalene laundry 3). Three weeks to my 19th Birthday, I was released.

I am happy for every aspect of my submission and identity to be made public and published in its entirety.

Section 2. Disposal of certain records.

I disagree with the designated officer and or director having the complete control to the disposal

of all records, because these need to be kept for future generations, to understand and know not only

the human aspects but also the financial and social history of Institutions in Ireland.

Transfer of Records on dissolution of relevant body.

3. (a) These records do not and never should belong to the Department of Education and skills.

how can the Department of Education say the records are theirs when the Religious make the same claim

and had the monopoly on these Institutions.

(b) If these records are transferred to the National Archives, the Director must discuss with

historians before he/she considers destroying them. Is and will the Director be Independent or influenced

by Government now or down the line?

(3) (a) Sealing Period. A sealing period of 75 years is not a good idea. It gives the impression there

is something to hide. These records are not Official Secrets and should Not be classed as so. These records

contain the history of Human Beings and the violation of their rights. When discussing this serious subject,

the issues should be considered seriously. From the findings of the report called Consultation with

Survivors, July 2019, that was instigated and paid for by Department of Education.

The findings from this report stated, 'the majority of survivors felt, this Bill is an affront and a violation to

their Human Rights and to their stories, and above all the survivors would like the Government to establish

a place of learning for future students if they so wish.' As a survivor I agree wholeheartedly with this.

These records should never be sealed and withheld from public inspection.

Regulations.

6. (1) 74 years from now it will be 2093. This Director the Government is proposing to decide on our records

is not born yet. He/she will be born in approximately in 2043 if 50 years old, when the Archivist position is

advertised. My Grandson will be 84 yrs and who will speak for me in 2093. As regarding taking into account the

effects of our well-being and emotional state of persons alive on the date of making the regulations. I personally,

will feel betrayed and deeply, deeply hurt by the Department of Education Minister, if he insists

to ignore our wishes. There will be a lot of angry Men and Women, feeling as I will, on the date of making this

regulation of sealing our records for 75 years. Institutional Irish Men and Women will know they do not have

their Human Rights respected in Ireland today .

7. (a) Amendment of Act 2000.

If the Act is not broken, why attempt to mend it? Why make arrangements for disposal of our records.

Instead of disposing our records, I would like the Department of Education to ask survivors the following

**question. Do you want your records to be made public and/or private?
if survivors want their records**

**to be public, let us have them. And the survivors who want their records
to remain private, they**

**remain private. Then everyone know where they stand, are happy with
the findings, and most**

**importantly of all there will be no recriminations down the line. I am
now asking the Department of Education,**

**to release my records under the Freedom of Information Act 2014. I
think it is very wrong to attempt to try to**

**silence us survivors by changing Acts to suit the Governments
narrative.**

8.

9. Restriction of Freedom of Information Act 2014.

**I disagree with every aspect of this suggestion. Not only does it silence
survivors, it demeans,**

**degrade and abuses survivors all over again. This Restriction is not
helpful for our well-being**

and mindfulness.

10. Expenses.

11. Short title, collective citation and commencement.

(1) This Act should be cited as Public/Private Records Act 2019.

(2) Should remain National Archives Acts 1986.

(3) Should remain as original Acts of 2000 and 2005, because that is when we survivors

were connected to these departments. By making changes it totally undermines the concept

of the genuine support and guidance implemented by Government in a historic time for survivors.

(4) Remain as it is.

(5) Hopefully, this Bill will never pass. It does not take into consideration the views of survivors.

Those of us who want our records to be Public, should be respected. Those of us who want our records

to remain Private, should be respected. All survivors will be happy if our views and wishes are

accepted. Most importantly, there would not be recriminations.

General recommendations

(1) I believe all survivors should be able to access the information in the archives that relate to them.

Because it is right and just for survivors to know and help them to make sense of their lives.

(2) I believe survivors should be able to request a copy of their own testimony, they gave to the Ryan

Commission or RIRB.

It would be nice for survivors to look back, recall and remember the moments they began

to believe they were been taken seriously. And for once we had the chance to speak without fear

or prejudice.

(3) Family members of children, who died in these institutions should be able to access their information.

I had a half brother called Alfie who died in the boys Industrial School. He was healthy on

arrival to this Industrial School, and approximately 5/6 months later, he died. I am curious to know

how and why this happened to Alfie and I'm still sad and it's a constant deep pain and anguish to me

every time I think of Dear Alfie so young at 5 years old and so alone.

(4) Any information of people who have died as adults, since leaving the schools, should be

available to their family members under any circumstances.

(5) I believe very strongly in making survivors testimonies available to the public, if it is anonymised

so that no one can identify the survivor or any other individuals from the testimony.

Because this is Irish History and must never be forgotten. It is paramount for this history to be

taught in Schools. We celebrate the 1916 Easter Rising. These soldiers fought for freedom, now

survivors are fighting for Justice and want our Grandchildren and Great Grandchildren to be

educated on how some children lived in the 20th century Ireland. By acknowledging this, the

Government is showing a sense of compassion, justice and truth through history, by making survivors

testimonies available to the public but in anonymised to protect the identity of survivors.

(6) I would like my testimony to be available to the public. I would prefer my testimony to be as it is.

with no anonymisation/redaction. Perhaps I am strong in character and mind and have no fear

or shame. I was a child. Now in my early 70's.

(7) I have never been given a promise from the Ryan Commission that my testimony would be

destroyed at the end of its work.

I have got my copy of my testimony to the Ryan Commission. This is proof no survivors were

ever told their testimonies would be destroyed at the end of its work.

(8) All the administrative records on how the Residential Schools system was run, Should be

available to the public. There should be no more secrets and lies. No reason for the Government

and future Irish Governments to continue defending and protecting the Catholic Church. I believe the

Catholic Church and Government have dark, dark secrets and this is why they protect each other.

These records should be made available immediately.

(9) I believe the information provided by the church's representatives to the Ryan Commission and

the RIRB should be made available to the public. This bill is about Justice, Honesty and Truth.

ALL of the Church's representatives information should be open and transparent. If this is done,

maybe, just maybe, survivors may see a light at the end of this dark miserable tunnel. And hopefully

put an end to this miserable journey of ours. We as survivors continue to live in limbo and some of

us will continue to carry these injustices to our graves, if no positive actions are taking now, even when

listening to what survivors want, then Ireland will always have a dark cloud hanging over her. Especially

when it comes to her actions and deeds towards the most vulnerable in it's society.

(10) I have still not got my Medical History or Records from the Industrial School. I am in a bad place health

wise right now. I am attending the Urologist Department. I have appointments on 7th, 9th and 12th November.

Yesterday, I had a pre-assessment appointment at one of the hospitals I will be attending. I was asked of

any diseases or illnesses I had in childhood. Sadly I could not answer. The Specialist asked me the same

questions last week, my answer is always the same. " I have no knowledge of any diseases in my childhood."

This is another reason why ALL our records should be released immediately. It is not fair on our children and

families, they have to watch us survivors in constant despair of hoping we might get our records. And this cycle

continues through our children and Grandchildren. They deserve to know what medical diseases they may have inherited.