

# DEBRA BOWEN

## CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE NEWS RELEASE

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### Secretary of State Bowen Applauds Signing of Records-Recovery Bill, Announces Newly Processed State Collections

**SACRAMENTO** – State and local governments can now more easily recover public records under a bill signed last night by Governor Schwarzenegger. Assembly Bill 1245 (Monning) creates a process for government entities, including the California State Archives, to retrieve documents that rightfully belong to all Californians.

“Many California treasures have slipped into private hands or even the marketplace, and getting them back to their rightful place has been nearly impossible,” said Secretary Bowen who, as custodian of the State Archives, maintains records of the official acts of the legislative and executive branches of state government, as well as Golden State history in the form of tens of millions of documents, maps, photographs, film and audio recordings, and artifacts. “This new law pushes back on people and businesses who try to profit by selling public records and establishes a process for returning such items to the public’s custody.”

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Also today, researchers now have easier and faster access to information about five California State Archives collections. The newly processed collections include records from:

- The California Medical Assistance Commission (1988-1993),
- The Senate Education Committee (1852-2008),
- Senator Sheila J. Kuehl (served in Legislature 1994-2008),
- The California Board of Control (1856-1995), and
- The Department of Mental Hygiene - Stockton State Hospital (1852-1994).

The Secretary of State’s office has been home to the State Archives since 1850. Among the treasures housed in secure, climate-controlled rooms stretching over six floors of the State Archives’ Sacramento building are the original California Constitutions; Spanish and Mexican land grant records; election records dating back to 1849; political campaign items; and evidence, tapes, and photographs from the Los Angeles Police Department investigation of the Robert F. Kennedy assassination.

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**DB09:060**  
**October 12, 2009**  
**Page 2**

The California State Archives continually organizes the materials it receives and creates detailed guides to collections known as “finding aids” that make researching easier. For more information about the California State Archives collections, or for assistance on a historical research project, go to [www.sos.ca.gov/archives](http://www.sos.ca.gov/archives).

Finding aids for the recently processed collections are available on the Online Archive of California at [www.oac.cdlib.org/search/findingaid.html](http://www.oac.cdlib.org/search/findingaid.html), a single digital database of finding aids that provides information about materials held in archives, libraries, museums, and historical societies across California.

October is California Archives Month. For more information about activities and archival entities across the state, go to [www.archivesmonth.org](http://www.archivesmonth.org).

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