

CJ Griffin Quoted in Opinion of Star Ledger Editorial Board discussing OPRA

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CJ Griffin

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CJ Griffin, Director of the Justice Gary S. Stein Public Interest Center at Pashman Stein Walder Hayden, was quoted in the *Star Ledger* Editorial Board Opinion, “Does this look like the face of a bully?” Griffin, together with the American Civil Liberties Union of New Jersey (ACLU-NJ), agreed to provide pro bono legal representation to an Irvington resident to defend her in a lawsuit by Irvington township. The resident was sued by Irvington for filing requests under New Jersey’s Open Public Records Act (OPRA). After Griffin and ACLU-NJ were retained and the story received press, Irvington dropped the lawsuit against the resident. The Opinion discusses the lawsuit, as well as some of the underlying principles of OPRA.

But it might help to review the OPRA ground rules again for other municipalities and public entities that might get nettled when grandma comes around asking for a few documents during Sunshine Week.

Rule 1: “These records belong to the people—they are public records, and the clerk is the statutory custodian of our records, so this isn’t ‘extra’ work,” said attorney CJ Griffin, who represented McDaniel. “It’s a core duty of the clerk that’s just as important as any other duty.”

The Opinion also included a tweet by Griffin:

“Instead of treating civic engagement as a nuisance, towns should welcome the public’s desire to participate in government,” said @CJGriffinEsq

To view the full article, click here.