

ZITMORE, IRVING, *How to Decide Whether to Microfilm Business Records, and How to Go About It*. Reprinted from *The Journal of Accountancy*, February 1951. Gift of Records Engineering, Inc.

## ACTS OF ASSEMBLY AND OPINIONS OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Only a few years ago it was necessary for the Archivist actively to propagandize for the use of microfilm and photostat in record keeping. It has now become his difficult chore to try to block the irresponsible enthusiasm for photographic reproduction which threatens to discredit the photographic processes and to make a hash of the safeguards we have so carefully erected through the years. The last session of the General Assembly had a hopper full of microfilm and photostat bills which seemed to us to be harmful. Some of them we were able to defeat—for example, a certain Clerk of Court, having installed microfilm equipment to do initial recording, had a bill introduced to permit him to raise his fees for recording because of the greater cost of microfilming. Since one of the chief reasons for microfilm recording is its cheapness, the logic of this position was indefensible.

But our opposition to the major bills was totally ineffective. Perhaps the most objectionable measure was Chapter 77 of the Acts of 1951, part of the text of which is given here below. Our objection to it was based on the fact that (1) it treats governmental and private records alike, (2) it deprives the Hall of Records Commission of its powers to determine what records should be microfilmed, (3) it makes it easy for records which have been microfilmed to be destroyed. This act was sponsored by various Bar Associations throughout the country and it is known as "The Uniform Photographic Copies of Business and Public Records as Evidence Act."

"68A. (a) If any business, institution, member of a profession or calling, or any department or agency of government, in the regular course of business or activity has kept or recorded any memorandum, writing, entry, print, representation or combination thereof, of any act, transaction, occurrence or event, and in the regular course of business has caused any or all of the same to be recorded, copied or reproduced by any photographic, photostatic, microfilm, micro-card, miniature photographic, or other process which accurately reproduces or forms a durable medium