

April 11, 2018

H. 899 –

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Thank you for the opportunity to speak to H. 899 and explain why the amendments to the bill in the House did not work for the clerks that receive their salary in fees.

Draft No. 1.4 simplifies the earlier versions and allows some flexibility to address the concerns of our very diverse group.

Reverting to the \$40/5 formula for trust mortgages, complaints of foreclosure, and all other documents received for recording into the land records allows the fee to be increased for the first page where the majority of the work is generated.

- Certified copies will remain at \$10 per page
- Property transfers will be a flat fee of \$25
- Municipal or local filings will be a flat fee of \$15
- Survey maps will be a flat fee of \$30

The bill requires that the legislative body shall maintain a Restoration Reserve Fund:

- An amount equivalent to at least \$10 per document for trust mortgages, complaints of foreclosure; all other documents received into the land records, and survey maps. If a town chooses to reserve additional monies they can do so with their legislative body approval

The bill expands the use of the restoration funds to include the purchase of hardware or software related to carrying out these activities in a manner that is consistent with legal requirements; and the acquisition of maintenance of safes or vaults as required under 24 VSA Sec. 1178.

Lastly, the bill recognizes a transition period so that documents that are accompanied by the wrong fee are not returned without an attempt to contact the sender until at least January 1, 2019.

VMCTA appreciates the consideration you have given to this bill.