



February 2, 2022

Representative Michael Marcotte, Chairman
Representative Charles Kimbell, Vice Chair
House Committee on Commerce & Economic Development
115 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05633-5301

RE: H.512, Land Records Modernization & Notarial Acts

Dear Chairman Marcotte and Vice Chair Kimbell,

On behalf of Vermont credit unions, I'm writing to provide comment related to [H.512](#) on modernizing of land records and notarial acts. The Association of Vermont Credit Unions is the trade association for cooperative member-owned credit unions in our state, in which about 68% of consumers are members.

Many credit unions frequently have need to research or file information with many of Vermont's municipal record-keeping offices through the course of a year. Although on occasion there are other reasons for contacting a town clerk, the vast majority of credit union contacts are no doubt related to land records for real estate lending purposes.

As you know, record-keeping practices across Vermont municipalities vary widely. That fact, and the shortcoming of having varied practices has been exacerbated by the past two years of pandemic, during which timeliness of record-keeping and accessibility to records have had a light shone upon them. In too many instances, this has delayed service by financial institutions and others to involved consumers.

Although some municipalities have been digitizing land records already, some are nowhere near starting to do so, and still others are somewhere in between. Even those already digitized use varied and separate systems. Depending on the municipality, those needing to access land records might have to drive, use mail, or access one of a number of different online systems to perform their duties. This makes for an awkward and convoluted process at a time when consumers expect expediency and the technologies are available for everyone to do so.

Over these past two years, credit unions have had to greatly modernize and update their technological capabilities in order to continue meeting the financial needs of Vermont consumers in more acceptable ways during a pandemic. We feel strongly that a modernization of land record systems in Vermont is long overdue. The lack of timely document filing and remote accessibility to records in a uniform manner across Vermont municipalities is a hindrance to all those who must touch those records.



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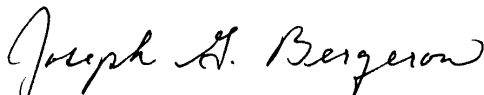
www.vermontcreditunions.coop/

Conclusion

In general, we support the concept and intent of H.512 to modernize Vermont's land records system. Although we understand that creating any kind of uniform centralized access to land records in Vermont poses challenges, we are certain there's no better time than now to pursue such a project given modern-day technologies, the availability of funds and dire need for modernization brought to light by pandemic times. We would fully support any effort that results in greater ease of access to land records for all those needing to do so, and strongly encourage your support as well.

On behalf of Vermont's credit unions and the members who use them, thank you for considering our comments regarding the modernization of access to Vermont's land records. If you have questions about our comments, please do not hesitate to contact me at 802-861-7030 or joebergeron@vermontcreditunions.coop.

Sincerely,


Joseph G. Bergeron
President