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**Written Testimony before the House Committee on Human Services and Housing
in Opposition to House Bill 4007**

Chair Keny-Guyer, Vice-Chairs Olson & Sanchez, and Representatives Gorsek, Meek, Nearman, Noble, Piluso, and Stark,

The Oregon Association of County Clerks (OACC) is opposed to a \$75 Affordable Housing Fee as included in HB 4007, Section 12.

The proposed Affordable Housing Fee of \$75 per recorded document would change the average cost of recording a single-page document in Oregon from \$46 to \$101 – a 120% increase. We believe this kind of change to the fee structure will impact many people and potentially have widespread unintended consequences that include:

- Placing the burden of financing affordable housing on a small number of people
- Some people and entities will avoid filing documents properly
- Those with multiple documents to record will pay a high price
- Severe penalties for filings or recordings with errors that need refileing
- Shifting resources from other state and local agencies with capped fee capacity
- Compounds the unfunded mandate to Clerks of collecting and dispersing taxes/fees
- The Affordable Housing Fee has debatable nexus to many of the documents we record
- Filing property records should be affordable, easy and accessible for everyone – high costs to file a document run counter to those goals to provide information to the public

The OACC encourages equal access to and treatment of all customers. Our customers include home sellers and buyers, title companies and researchers, cities, special districts and state agencies, as well as family members of those with property in Oregon. Our mandate includes the accepting, recording, archiving and providing copies of and access to the property records in our respective counties across Oregon. In order to provide those services quickly, accurately, equitably, and affordably, the cost we charge must be reasonable.

This mandate we are given is a Constitutional one. The records entrusted to us are permanent records that are to be kept available for all in the public interest maintaining clear descriptions of property interest and ownership.