



720 W. Chisholm St., Suite 4
Alpena, MI 49707

Catherine Murphy
Alpena County Register of Deeds

Mandy Smith, Chief Deputy
Jessica Kendziorski, Deputy
Phone (989) 354-9547

To: Robert Adrian, Board Chairman

From: Catherine Murphy, Register of Deeds
Kimberly Ludlow, Treasurer

Date: June 28, 2022

Subject: HB's 4729, 4730, 4731, 4732 a.k.a Zillow Bills

Request: That the Alpena County Board of Commissioners support the Alpena County Register of Deeds and the Alpena County Treasurer to oppose HB4729, HB4730, HB4731, and HB4732. These bills will greatly reduce much needed revenue that fund operations for both offices and provide excellent services to the constituents of Alpena County.

Background: Zillow has spearheaded legislation to undermine the integrity of the Register of Deeds and Treasurers offices across the State of Michigan, which will greatly reduce revenues needed to fund the daily operation of both offices. Zillow, a for profit corporation, is asking the State of Michigan legislature to pass legislation that will provide them ALL the records of the Alpena County's taxpayers from both the Register of Deeds and the Treasurer's offices at a huge discount or in some instances 100% free of charge. Zillow will then sell those records for profit putting our constituents at a higher risk of fraud or theft while placing the burden to fund the offices on the taxpayers of Alpena County. The Michigan Association of County Treasurers and the Michigan Association of Register of Deeds, both bi-partisan organizations UNANIMOUSLY oppose these bills.

Recommendation: That the Alpena County Board of Commissioners stand in solidarity with the Alpena County Register of Deeds and the Alpena County Treasurer to oppose HB's 4729, 4730, 4731, 4732 and stand up to corporations that data mine records for profit while placing the burden on the Alpena County taxpayers. Also, that the Board of Commissioners send a resolution in opposition to the above bills to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Senate Majority Leader and the Governor of the State of Michigan.

Catherine Murphy – Alpena County Register of Deeds
Kimberly Ludlow – Alpena County Treasurer

ALPENA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

A RESOLUTION OPPOSING MICHIGAN HOUSE BILLS 4729, 4730, 4731, & 4732

WHEREAS, Zillow, a for-profit corporation from Seattle, WA, has been lobbying the Michigan Legislature to pass legislation that undermines the integrity of Register of Deeds and Treasurer Offices across the State of Michigan; and

WHEREAS, the legislation that Zillow is lobbying for would require Register of Deeds and Treasurer Offices across the State of Michigan to provide for-profit corporations copies of any official records maintained by those offices at a significant discount or in some instances free of any charge. As a result, the taxpayers will be responsible for picking up the tab for providing these records and the financial burden created by the loss of revenue for these offices; and

WHEREAS, if these Bills become law, Zillow and other for-profit corporations will have the ability to demand the manner in which the Register of Deeds and Treasurer must provide copies of official records; and

WHEREAS, if these Bills become law, they would impose new restrictions and limits on what the Register of Deeds and Treasurer Offices can charge for parcel cards, and would burden Michigan taxpayers with the cost to provide records to out-of-state entities and corporate organizations; and

WHEREAS, Zillow and other corporations will capitalize on selling publicly owned records, provided to them free of charge, while at the same time placing Michigan residents at a higher risk for fraud and theft; and

WHEREAS, the Michigan Association of Counties, Michigan Association of County Treasurers, Michigan Association of County Clerks, Michigan Association of Register of Deeds, and the Michigan Municipal League are united in opposing Michigan House Bills 4729, 4730, 4731, 4732.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Alpena County Board of Commissioners OPPOSE Michigan House Bills 4729, 4730, 4731, & 4732, as private corporations should not benefit financially from public records at the expense of Michigan taxpayers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution in opposition to the above bills be forwarded to Governor Gretchen Whitmer, the Speaker of the Michigan House of Representatives, and the Majority Leader of the Michigan Senate.

ADOPTED THIS 28TH DAY OF JUNE 2022

ATTEST:

Robert Adrian, Chair

ALPENA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



Michigan Association of Registers of Deeds, Inc.

2022

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04.28.2022

To: State of Michigan Senate

From: Michigan Association of Registers of Deeds

RE: HB 4730 (2021)

Senators,

The Michigan Association of Registers of Deeds is firmly opposed to HB 4730. Originally, out of the bill package which included HB 4729-4732, our membership has spent several days in Lansing either testifying or meeting with Zillow and the bill sponsors in work groups. Ultimately, those items affecting Register of Deeds offices were pulled back. During our meetings, however we learned about the other bills and found them to be of similar concern to ours, in that they add additional workload as well as costs to our counties as a whole. These additional costs would be a substantial burden to our tax paying constituents. We (MARD) stand firm in our position against private industry raising the cost on our tax paying constituents for their financial gain. There was a last-minute sub presented which was misrepresented as being a "fix" and now we find ourselves headed to the Senate with HB 4730 in its worst form yet.

We appreciate your leadership and hope that you consider our position as those elected to handle and protect these records. Please feel free to reach out to our association with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

BRANDON DENBY

517.546.0270 main

517.540.8823 direct

BDenby@LivGov.com

Livingston County Register of Deeds

MI Assoc. of Register of Deeds - President

United County Officers Assoc. - Vice President



Michigan Association of Registers of Deeds, Inc.

2022

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04.28.2022

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To: Michigan Association of Counties
From: Michigan Association of Registers of Deeds
RE: HB 4730 (2021)

The Michigan Association of Registers of Deeds (MARD) alongside of the Michigan Association of County Treasurers (MACT) are asking for the assistance and support of the Michigan Association of Counties in regards to HB 4730 (2021). Originally, out of the bill package which included HB 4729-4732, our memberships have spent several days in Lansing either testifying or meeting with Zillow and the bill sponsors in work groups. Ultimately, only HB 4730 made it to the house floor.

On December 8th, 2021 and after 3 readings this bill did not have the votes necessary to move forward. On April 27, 2022, a last minute sub for HB 4730 was brought on to the house floor without any representation to either MACT or MARD. That sub for the bill was successful in passing and now we find ourselves headed to the Senate with HB 4730 in its worst form yet.

Again, we ask that your association support us in letting the Michigan Senate know that this bill is not good for Michigan Counties and that it is not good for our tax paying constituents.

Sincerely,

BRANDON DENBY

517.546.0270 main
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Livingston County Register of Deeds

MI Assoc. of Register of Deeds - President

United County Officers Assoc. - Vice President



Michigan Association OF County Treasurers

Bob Robinson, ACPFIM, President
1045 Independence Blvd
Charlotte, MI 48813
rrobinson@eatoncounty.org
(517) 543-4250

Cathy Lunsford, 1st V.P. – Midland County
Andrew Kmetz, 2nd V.P. – Mason County
Amanda Price, Secretary – Ottawa County
Eric Sabree, Treasurer – Wayne County
Jenny Nash, Immediate Past President – Livingston County

To: State of Michigan Senate

From: Michigan Association of County Treasurers (MACT)

RE: HB 4730 (2021)

Dear Senators,

The Michigan Association of County Treasurers is opposed to HB 4730. We do not believe this legislation strengthens public records law. We believe it undermines the integrity of operations within County Treasurer and County Register of Deeds offices across the state, and reduces the revenues needed to fund operations within these important public offices. Current legislation, crafted in 2015 with strong support of the Michigan Association of County Treasurers and the Michigan Realtors Association, has proven very effective in providing public tax records.

HB 4730 would force county treasurers to comply with record requests for information that is not statutorily held within their offices. County treasurers hold and collect "delinquent" tax records, not "current tax" records. Current tax records are held by local units of government. HB 4730 would hamstring county treasurer operations with inordinate amounts of staff time and expense for the collection of data and do so with insufficient compensation. This unfairly places the expense of data collection that would benefit for-profit corporations squarely on the backs of individual taxpayers.

The data affected by HB 4730 is already provided by public offices free of charge to taxpayers of record, and at low cost to others. State legislation to benefit a singular corporation, in this case Zillow, is not necessary.

It is the duty of County Treasurers and Registers of Deeds to protect the interests of taxpayers. That is why this legislative proposal is opposed by the Michigan Association of County Treasurers, the Michigan Association of Registers of Deeds, and several other groups of county level and locally elected officials. County treasurers across the state firmly believe in transparency in government affairs but would hope it does not come at the expense of individual taxpayers.

We appreciate your leadership and hope that you consider our position.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob".

Bob Robinson, ACPFIM
MACT President
Eaton County Treasurer