



April 24, 2015

House Committee on Rules
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: House Bill 3505

To the Honorable Chair Hoyle and Members of the House Committee on Rules:

I am the City Recorder for the City of Dallas, Oregon. This is a position I treat very conscientiously, and make a concerted effort to provide our residents the transparency they demand and deserve. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, I respond to records requests within one business day, with either the requested document or a written response estimating the time it will take to produce the record(s) and the estimated cost, or clarifying the request. I have never delayed a response or inflated costs because I did not want to fill a request.

Dallas, and every other city in Oregon, is struggling to provide high quality customer service to our residents with less and less resources. In addition to my recorder duties, I am the human resources department, the risk manager, the volunteer coordinator, the public information officer, the elections official, and the legislative administrator. I take each of these responsibilities equally seriously, and manage to balance my priorities to the satisfaction of all those responsibilities. I do not appreciate the legislature's implication that they can better prioritize my workload than I can.

Given the struggles cities are facing with their budgets, HB 3505's additional burden of limiting the amount of money cities can charge for records is unfair. Every fee the City of Dallas charges has been carefully calculated based upon our actual costs. Whenever possible, we fill records requests electronically, and provide as many records on our website as we can. We do not typically charge for electronic records responses, nor do we charge for one or two pages of copies.

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The proposed changes to the records retention schedule included in HB 3505 are neither sustainable nor equitable for many cities. The City of Dallas already struggles with records storage and we certainly do not have storage capabilities to retain, for instance, a desk calendar for 3 years. Given the fact that I am required to store 141 years of minutes, ordinances, agendas, budgets, audits, and resolutions, not to mention the public works contracts, planning records, maps, charters, codes, easements, urban renewal plans, water consumption reports, and risk management plans (to name a few) that must be kept permanently, I have already had to get creative in finding places to store these records. Adding to that storage burden will likely make it that much harder to find records when a request comes in, making this legislation a two-fold difficulty.

I appreciate your time and consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Emily Gagner". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Emily Gagner
City Recorder/HR Manager