



City of Independence, Oregon

April 24, 2015

The Honorable Val Hoyle
House Committee on Rules
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

RE: HB 3505

Dear Representative Hoyle and Members of the Committee:

My name is Karin Johnson, and I am the City Recorder for the City of Independence, Oregon. We are a mid-sized city (population 8,600), across the river and a little south from Salem.

First of all, let me state that as the records officer for the city, I take my responsibilities very seriously, recognizing that our citizens have the right to get information from their elected officials and city staff. Whenever possible, I respond to records requests within 48 hours, whether it is providing the document(s) requested, or to let the requestor know an estimate of time it would take to provide them. If the estimated cost exceeds \$10, I also provide them with the estimate before proceeding.

However, the provisions in HB 3505 could place a burden on our city. We have limited staff – for example, I am the records department for the city – no staff, no assistant. Although I request assistance from other administrative staff when I take vacation, for example, the reality is that they may have their own mandated deadlines to meet. It is possible a requestor might not get a response within 7 days. This doesn't mean we are trying to avoid the request, just that it may not be possible.

Another added burden is cost. Limiting the per-page fee to five cents is not reasonable in our instance; our copier lease has a per-page fee of six cents. Add paper and staff time to retrieve, copy and re-file the document adds to the total cost. Our city was incorporated in 1874 – many, many documents are still in paper form, not digitized. Manual retrieval of paper files is still a common occurrence. Land use files, especially, can provide a challenge – generally, they are a mix of sizes and types – from 8-1/2 X 11 up to blueprint size, and require significant staff handling.

Now that we have scanning capability, many of the city's most frequently requested documents – copies of minutes, ordinances and agendas – are posted on our website, giving our citizens immediate access to them. We are continually updating the number and nature of documents.

Thank you for your time and your consideration of our concerns.

Sincerely,


Karin Johnson
City Recorder

555 S. MAIN STREET, P.O. BOX 7, INDEPENDENCE, OR 97351
Phone: 503.838.1212 • Fax: 503.606.3282 • TTY: 800.735.2900
www.ci.independence.or.us

The City is an Equal Opportunity Provider

