

Remote Online Notarization (Sections 27-40 of LC45 and Sections 19-32 of LC84)

Senate President Courtney and Speaker Kotek, vice chairs Senate Republican Leader Girod and House Republican Leader Drazan and members of the Joint Interim Committee on The First Special Session of 2020 –

The NWCUA would like to lend our voice and strong support for moving forward in the special session with the needed changes in statute to allow remote electronic appearance as an alternative to the requirement to appear personally before notarial officers to perform notarizations, and to authorize the Secretary of State to promulgate and issue rules to permit notarial officers to perform remote notarizations. Remote online notarization could benefit credit unions and their members. It allows notaries to electronically and remotely notarize documents, providing a tamper-proof electronic version of the document. Remote notarization would eliminate physical distancing concerns for consumers and notaries and would eliminate the need for rural residents to travel. The Washington legislature passed remote online notarization legislation last year, with an effective date of October 1, 2020. However, because it's such a relevant tool amid the pandemic, Governor Jay Inslee issued a proclamation allowing it to be used before the effective date, and the state Department of Labor issued emergency rules. Similarly, in Idaho, the legislature passed a remote notarization bill this year, and temporary rules are in place allowing for its use before the law officially takes effect.

In 2019, the Northwest Credit Union Association led the charge to authorize the recording of documents (such as trust deeds) that were created and signed electronically. The legislation, signed into law, provided lenders, title insurers, and county recording office the assurance that electronically signed documents can be record as long as they satisfy all applicable recording requirements. Remote notarization has been our next goal in updating laws related to lending practices.

This change will allow for the ability to practice strong social distancing standards and allow for Oregon citizens and businesses with a secure and safe method by which to execute important legal documents, and to promote and secure the safety and protections of individuals. We are especially aware that our senior citizens and rural Oregonians may need alternative methods for notarization during this time.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this feedback.

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