

Department of Community Services
Transportation Division – County Surveyor's Office



House Committee on Emergency Management, General Government and Veterans
900 Court St NE, HR C
Salem, OR 97301

February 11, 2025

Chair Tran, Vice-Chairs Grayber and Lewis, and members of the committee:

I am writing to you to urge your support of House Bill 3175. This bill allows county governments to increase the document recording fees that support the Public Land Corner Preservation Fund (PLCPF) by removing the \$10 statutory limit that has been in place since 1985. The Multnomah County Surveyor's Office uses the PLCPF to maintain and restore physical public land corner monuments (section corners, ¼ corners, etc.) throughout the county. All properties within the county are tied to these monuments, making them critical public infrastructure which helps ensure the integrity of property boundaries and promote efficient development and harmony between neighbors. In the 40 years since the PLCPF was established, inflation has reduced the buying power of \$10 dollars to roughly \$3 dollars. This bill will allow county governments to increase the fee as they see fit in order to continue these critical services going forward.

All property owners and users, including marginalized populations, would benefit from this bill. The maintenance of public land corners facilitates efficient land development, including middle housing and other developments intended to address critical housing shortages. Parties that would benefit include property owners, renters, developers, emergency services providers, land use planning agencies, land surveyors, title companies, transportation agencies, and anyone who relies on accurate property boundary data.

Over 1,000 public land corners across Multnomah County are regularly maintained by the County Surveyor's Office using the PLCPF. This bill will help ensure that this program is adequately funded going forward at current staffing and service levels.

The Multnomah County Surveyor's Office receives the largest portion of its funding through the PLCPF. Though we are fortunate to have adequate reserves at this time, we are currently operating at an annual deficit in this portion of our program and will not be able to maintain current service and staffing levels after the next few years without the ability to raise the \$10 PLCPF fee.

Thank you.

James S. Clayton, PLS
Multnomah County Surveyor