



To: Assembly Committee on Housing and Real Estate
From: Cori Lamont, Vice President of Legal and Public Affairs
Date: January 9, 2024
RE: AB 915/SB 872 – Increasing Document Recording Fees

The Wisconsin REALTORS® Association (WRA) opposes AB 915/SB 872 increasing the document recording fee.

Background

The WRA does not question the merits of the land information program. As a matter of fact, the WRA has been a long-time supporter of the land information program. In addition to being a member of the Wisconsin Land Information Council for decades, the WRA actively supported reallocating a \$5 portion of the document recording fee to create a statewide Digital Parcel Map in the 2013-2015 state budget.

However, the WRA does not support increasing the document recording fee and instead encourages the legislature to find alternative methods to fund the land information program. Everyone benefits from the land information program such as emergency services, local units of government, utility companies, GPS services, schools, and tourists to name a few, and yet the land information program is funded by those recording a document on real property.

AB 915/ SB 872

Increases the fee from \$30 to \$45 in the following way:

- Land information office: \$15 (currently \$8)
- Wisconsin Land Information Program: \$15 (currently \$7)
- General fund: no increase (currently \$15)

The legislation does not propose an increase to the county general fund. While a county may choose to use the \$15 to support the land information program in ways of staffing, hardware, software, data development, and maintenance, each county has discretion on how the \$15 collected from the document recording fee is allocated.

Proposed Recommendation

While there may be a variety of alternative revenue sources to support the increase to land information, one option could be to reallocate the \$15 to the general fund to the land information office and the Wisconsin Land Information Program. Redistributing the \$15 placed in the general fund where it can be used for broad county purposes to the land information program, achieves maintaining the current \$30 fee and increasing the funding support for the land information program.

Until sources other than increasing the recording fees are utilized to support the land information program, the WRA opposes AB 915/SB 872.