



# Daniel J. O'Connor Jr.

Franklin County Recorder

\*\*\*Press Release\*\*\*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Bill to Prevent Deed Scam Passes Ohio General Assembly

COLUMBUS, OH—Today, House Bill 52, which seeks to prevent homeowners from falling victim to a prevalent property document scam, passed the Ohio General Assembly. This particular scam charges homeowners substantial service fees for information that the public can receive for an exceedingly low price at their local county recorder's office or for free online, if the county provides this service.

"This scam has been plaguing Ohioans for years and I am thrilled to see the legislature do something about it," said Franklin County Recorder Daniel O'Connor. "After receiving multiple constituent complaints and, in one instance, a money order far exceeding what we charge for this service, my office has been monitoring this issue to ensure that Ohioans will no longer be victimized by this scam."

These scammers send out purposely deceiving notices that resemble official documents of the Recorder's office to homeowners, pressing them to pay up to \$89 for a copy of their deed. In contrast, recorder's offices typically charge \$2 for the first page and \$1 for each additional page (deeds are typically only a few pages) for the same information and, in some instances, there is no charge at all.

This legislation regulates two of the main components of the scam to help circumvent it from happening. First, it requires third parties to make certain disclosures so that they can no longer easily confuse consumers as to whom is soliciting them. Second, it restricts the amount of money they can charge a consumer for a copy of a deed, in an effort to make this scam less profitable and desirable for those looking to take advantage of the public.

"It is my hope that this piece of legislation ultimately prevents scams of this kind from occurring," added O'Connor. "However, it is still important to inform the public that they never have to go through a third party to access public information."

House Bill 52 has passed both the Ohio House and the Ohio Senate and will be sent to the Governor's desk, where he can sign the act into law or reject it by issuing a veto. If the Governor takes no action within 10 days, the act will become law without his signature.

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