



## New Legislation Would Allow Big Tech to Fleece Michigan Taxpayers

Michigan Association of Registers of Deeds says bills up in committee tomorrow are nothing more than a giveaway to out-of-state Big Tech companies looking to profit off of homeowners

LANSING — New legislation that would give away Michigan taxpayers' property data to Big Tech firms— for free— is up for consideration on Tuesday in the Michigan House Commerce & Tourism Committee and should be defeated, said the Michigan Association of Registers of Deeds (MARD) today.

House Bills 4729-4732 would essentially eliminate the statutory fees required for copies and images of data from Michigan property ownership records. These "user fees" are what pay for Michigan's very important system of recording property ownership, sales mortgages and more.

Without these user fees, Michigan's taxpayers will be required to foot the bill to maintain the very electronic systems these technology giants are profiting from.

### **A Taxpayer-Funded Gift to Billion-Dollar Big Tech Companies**

But, under the proposed legislation, out-of-state Big Tech companies would essentially pay nothing as they data mine detailed personal and property information on millions of Michigan families and use it to generate big profits through the services they sell as they devise ways to repackaging and further monetize the information.

"Michigan has a well-functioning system that ensures funding for the technology and infrastructure needed to securely record property ownership, mortgages and other real estate transactions," said MARD President Michelle Stevenson. "But, if these bills become law, Big Tech companies will avoid paying their fair share for the information that has turned some into billion-dollar companies. We need to stop the Big Tech giveaway."

("Zillow Group Sees a Path to \$20 Billion in Revenue Within 5 Years", Motley Fool.com)

### **Destroying a Well-Functioning—and Necessary— Part of Government**

Currently, Michigan law requires that a fee of \$1.00 per page is paid when property record searches are done at county register of deeds offices. But, national technology companies want



to conduct massive data mining operations on Michigan property owners in order to profit on selling real estate-based services across the country. That is why they are pursuing legislation that would essentially leave them with all of our data for only the cost of a thumb drive and the cost of postage needed to mail it to Silicon Valley.

Furthermore, eliminating fees for these types of data mining operations may only make it easier for criminals and scammers to obtain and use property owners' information in any number of criminal activities that will hurt Michigan residents.

### **Michigan's Property Record Experts: Say No to The Big Tech Giveaway**

Michigan's Registers of Deeds are the local officials charged with the responsibility of securely recording every property transaction and preserving these records in perpetuity. This not only means documents recorded electronically today, but also the microfilm, digital images and even paper documents that go back 150 years.

That responsibility requires a funded system of well-trained staff, advanced technology, climate-controlled storage, and cutting-edge security to stop online hackers and scammers who attempt to defraud property owners and mortgage companies each and every day.

MARD strongly opposes the bills because Michigan taxpayers would be forced to continue funding our property record infrastructure on their own. Meanwhile, Big Tech would get to use that system nearly free-of-charge to generate billions in revenue and profit for themselves by selling the personal data of Michigan residents.

### **Learn More**

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