



# 126th MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2013

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Legislative Document

No. 465

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H.P. 315

House of Representatives, February 14, 2013

### **An Act To Improve Access to Public Land Records**

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Reference to the Committee on State and Local Government suggested and ordered printed.

*Millicent M. MacFarland*  
MILLICENT M. MacFARLAND  
Clerk

Presented by Representative MORIARTY of Cumberland.  
Cosponsored by Representatives: HAYES of Buckfield, NELSON of Falmouth.

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 33 MRSA §751, sub-§1**, as amended by PL 2005, c. 246, §1, is further  
3 amended to read:

4 **1. Instruments generally.** Receiving, recording and indexing any instrument that  
5 may be recorded and for which a specific fee is not set forth in this section or in any other  
6 section, the sum of ~~\$13~~ \$15 for the first record page and \$2 for each additional record  
7 page or portion of an additional record page. In addition, if more than 4 names are to be  
8 indexed, a fee of \$1 must be paid for each additional name, counting all grantors and  
9 grantees;

10 **Sec. 2. 33 MRSA §751, sub-§14-B**, as amended by PL 2011, c. 508, §1, is  
11 further amended to read:

12 **14-B. Copies.** Making ~~abstracts and~~ copies of records at the office of the register of  
13 deeds as follows:

- 14 A. Five dollars per page for paper ~~abstracts and~~ copies of plans;
- 15 B. One dollar per page for other paper ~~abstracts and~~ copies; and
- 16 C. ~~Fifty cents per page for digital abstracts and copies, except that the fee is 5¢ per~~  
17 ~~page for copies of 1,000 or more digital abstracts and copies of consecutive records~~  
18 For any quantity of copies produced on media other than paper, an amount equal to  
19 110% of the costs incurred solely to fulfill the request for copies; and

20 **Sec. 3. 33 MRSA §751, sub-§14-D** is enacted to read:

21 **14-D. Internet access to land records.** A registry of deeds may establish a website  
22 subscription fee of up to \$30 per month, but may not charge any other fees to a person  
23 who inspects, copies and downloads digital copies of official land records from a registry  
24 of deeds website; and

25 **SUMMARY**

26 This bill improves access to public land records by limiting the fees registries of  
27 deeds may charge for digital copies. Maine's Freedom of Access Act limits the fees state  
28 agencies may charge for copies of public records to the cost of producing copies, but the  
29 Maine Revised Statutes, Title 33 permits registries of deeds to charge a much higher fee  
30 for digital copies. The bill also removes outdated references to abstracts, since registries  
31 of deeds no longer prepare such documents.