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Testimony of
SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson

Before the House Committees on
CONSUMER PROTECTION AND COMMERCE
and
JUDICIARY

Tuesday, February 12, 2019
2:35 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 329

In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 777, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO RECORDATION TRANSACTION FEES

House Bill 777, House Draft 1 proposes to amend Act 120, Session Law of 2009 (Act 120), to: 1) apply the \$5 transaction fee to all recordings performed at the Bureau of Conveyances (Bureau) to include collection on each filing in the Land Court; 2) expand the uses of this transaction fee for records management improvements; and 3) clarifying the repeal date. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) strongly supports this bill.**

Act 120 intended to provide the necessary funding to correct serious shortcomings at the Bureau identified by the Joint Legislative Investigative committee under Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 226 (2007). To date, as a result of the Act, the Bureau has significantly improved the automation and integrity of the recording process, establishing web and digital access to parts of the Bureau's database and records, and created the portal and process for the electronic recording of documents. Future key improvement projects include completing digitization, protecting and increasing accessibility to the Bureau's records and maps, and establishing a critical disaster recovery plan that can continue the Bureau's operation in times of an emergency.

This bill proposes to expand the source and authorized use of these transaction fees to address many of the evolving issues that the Bureau faces such as enhancing technology and digitization, improving workflow processes for both daily and historical records processing and certification, and restoring and preserving physical records to name a few.

Additionally, this bill proposes to clarify repeal of the fee on the earlier to occur of a designated sunset date or the date a transaction fee is established in the Bureau's administrative rules.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.