

**RAISED HOUSE BILL 5512,
AN ACT AUTHORIZING ADDITIONAL FEES FOR MUNICIPAL PUBLIC
RECORDS REQUESTED FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES
Government Administration and Elections Committee**

March 7, 2016

Sen. Cassano, Rep. Jutila, Sen. McLachlan, Rep. Smith, committee members

I am James H. Smith, president, Connecticut Council on Freedom of Information. We essentially agree with the FOIC on this bill. One of the FOI Act's bedrock principles has been equal access for all, embracing the idea that government information belongs to us all unless the law offers an exemption.

We have two other concerns. The bill keeps the language on hand-held scanners, but does not address the newer use of cellphone photos of records. It should.

Town clerks are taking the language of charging "up to \$20," and charging \$20 per page every time someone takes a photo of a land record. I have been told that some title search companies are going out of business having to pay \$20 a page.

We believe there should be absolutely no charge to anyone for taking a picture of records with a camera or a scanner.

Thanks you.