



March 18, 2020

The Honorable Mike DeWine  
Riffe Center, 30<sup>th</sup> Floor  
77 South High Street  
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Governor DeWine,

Ohio's county auditors and recorders are essential actors in keeping the housing and commercial real estate markets open during this global health crisis. Ohio citizens, REALTORS®, title professionals and financial institutions rely on these two county offices for access to the official record of all real property transactions. Title examiners, in particular, need access to the county offices and courthouse records to search the title of real property so that matters can proceed to closing and so that title interests can be transferred.

Many county offices have closed or have restricted the ability of Ohio citizens to have their real estate transactions officially recorded and the ability of title examiners to access reliable information required for the lawful transfer or conveyance of property interests.

We encourage you to help Ohioans seeking to transfer real property or refinance their properties in a timely manner by having these offices remain open during the COVID-19 crisis.

Therefore, we recommend an Executive Order be issued that would require County Recorders and Auditors maintain minimal hours of operation for official filings and requests, processing of recorded information and providing accurate records of the counties' official records. If maintaining a limited open office is not feasible, we would recommend a requirement that these offices maintain a drop box or other similar mechanism that would insure the transaction of business without direction physical interaction.

Ohio REALTORS® and Ohio closing agents are working hard to maintain a safe and clean closing environment in which to transact real sales and refinances critical to maintaining economic stability and savings to Ohio homeowners.

We greatly appreciate your continued leadership during this crisis. Please know that we are available and willing to help.

Sincerely,

Two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature is "Mark Bennett" and the second is "Scott Williams".

Mark Bennett  
Executive Director  
Ohio Land Title Association

Scott Williams  
CEO  
Ohio Association of REALTORS®