

TOWN OF HOPKINTON, RHODE ISLAND
Resolution in Support of Rhode Island H 7551, as Amended

WHEREAS, the integrity of land records is essential to the protection of property rights, the stability of real estate markets, and the public's trust in municipal and state recording systems; and

WHEREAS, incidents of real estate title fraud—where individuals unlawfully transfer, encumber, or otherwise manipulate property ownership through forged, fraudulent, or deceptive documents—have increased nationwide, posing significant financial and legal harm to homeowners, lenders, and municipalities; and

WHEREAS, current state law does not provide sufficient criminal penalties or procedural safeguards to deter title fraud or to empower municipal officials to prevent the recording of documents that appear fraudulent on their face; and

WHEREAS, H 7551, as amended, would establish a clearly defined **criminal offense of real estate title fraud**, ensuring that individuals who knowingly prepare, submit, or record fraudulent real estate documents are subject to appropriate penalties; and

WHEREAS, H 7551, as amended, would further **authorize municipalities to refuse to record suspicious documents**, thereby strengthening local oversight and preventing fraudulent transfers from entering the public record; and

WHEREAS, the legislation also provides **penalties and enforcement mechanisms** necessary to protect property owners, support law enforcement, and uphold the accuracy and reliability of municipal land evidence records; and

WHEREAS, this legislation also provides protection to the town should someone in the clerk's office mistakenly recorded a fraudulent document; and

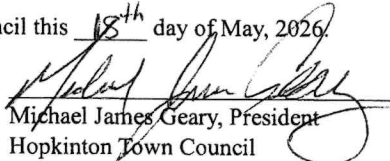
WHEREAS, safeguarding property ownership is a fundamental public interest, and municipalities require modern tools to identify, deter, and respond to fraudulent activity affecting land titles.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Hopkinton Town Council hereby **expresses its strong support for H 7551, as amended**, and urges the Rhode Island General Assembly to enact this legislation to protect homeowners, strengthen municipal authority, and preserve the integrity of real estate records; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Clerk is hereby directed to transmit a copy of this Resolution to the Speaker of the House, the President of the Senate, the Governor of Rhode Island, and the members of the General Assembly representing the Town of Hopkinton.

The **RESOLUTION** shall take effect upon passage.

Passed as a resolution of the Hopkinton Town Council this 18th day of May, 2026.


Michael James Geary, President
Hopkinton Town Council

ATTEST: Marita D. Murray
Marita D. Murray, Town Clerk