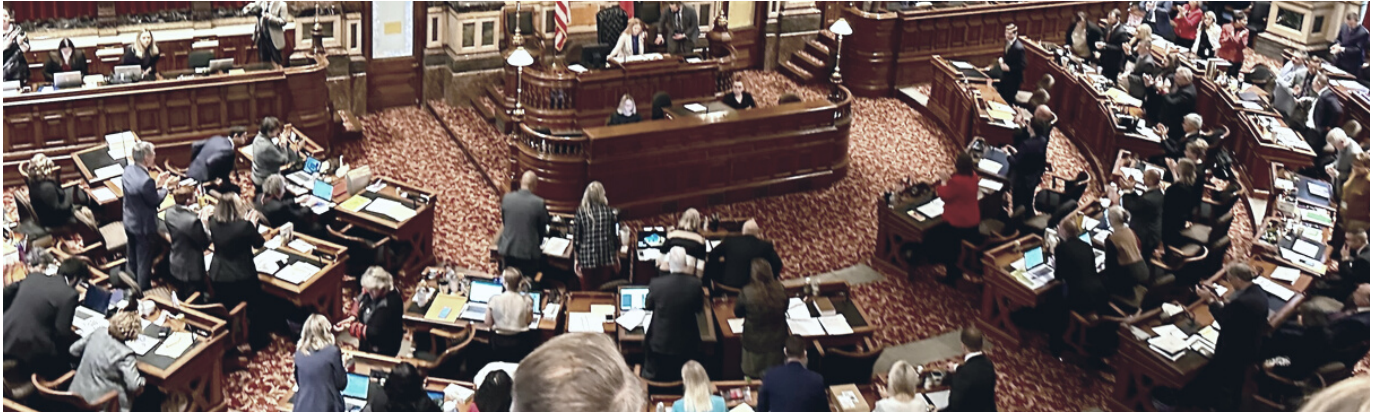




POLICY BRIEF

IOWA COUNTY RECORDERS ASSOCIATION POLICY BRIEF



JANUARY 31, 2024

OPENING LEGISLATIVE
SESSION RECAP

SURVEY RESULTS OF
RECORDER FEES

ADVOCACY CHALLENGE
SCHEDULE

[LINK TO ICRA HUB](#)

OPENING OF THE 2024 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Census K Lo-liyong

This year's legislative session started on January 8th, 2024. The session began with traditional opening formalities, including gaveling in both the House and Senate chambers, leadership speeches, and procedural business.

Key legislative priorities this session will include income tax reform, boards and commissions alignment, and education policy. Gov. Kim Reynolds presented her condition of the state with focal point on literacy, education, health and income tax. The 2024 Iowa Legislative session is slated to last for 100 days.

(continued on page 2)

(continued) LEGISLATIVE SESSION

There are expectations of several retirements this year, which could lead to changes in the composition of the General Assembly, especially as 2024 is an election year. ESS is monitoring HF 2062 and SF 2065. ESS is coordinating with ISAC on the HF 2062 (Open Meetings and Open Records Bill). While on SF 2065 (County Recorders Notification Bill), ESS informed bill sponsors that ILR is working on a notification plan as part of its legislative priorities for 2025, ESS is actively engaging with the committee members in the House and Senate. Please refer to the talking points on page 6.

HF 2062

Open Meetings and Open Records Bill

- The bill proposes amending Section 21.6 to increase the damages assessed against each member of a governmental body who participates in a violation.

SF 2065

County Recorders Notification Bill

- The bill requires that county recorders must implement and administer a system to notify a person when any instrument is recorded if the person is a named party to the instrument.



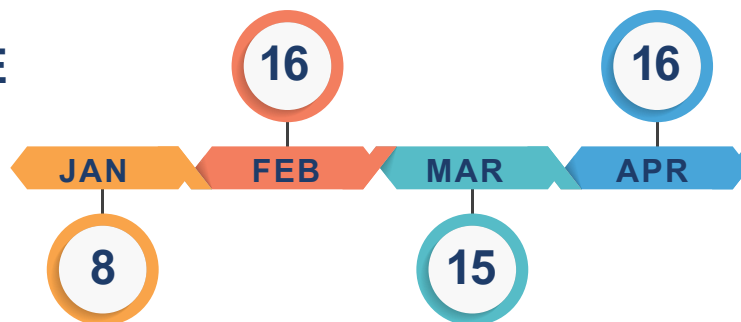
SESSION TIMELINE

Jan 8 - Session begins

Feb 16 - First funnel

Mar 15 - Second funnel

Apr 16 - Session's 100th day, per diem ends



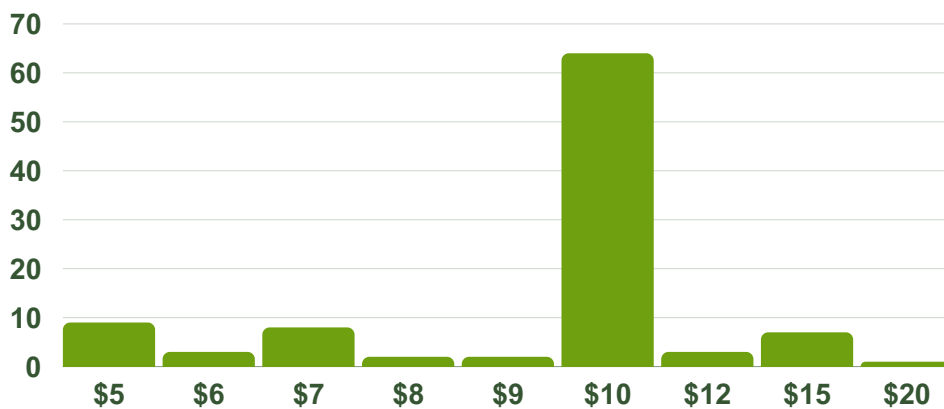
DATE	NOTES/ REMINDERS

FEE POLICY SURVEY RESULTS

In January, a "Fee Policy Survey" was conducted with participants from 97 Iowa counties by county recorders. The purpose of the survey was to gather insights on any proposed adjustments to recording fees and the effective allocation of the associated revenues. Topics such as the justification for fee changes, expected reactions from major stakeholders, and plans for the utilization of increased funds were addressed.

***Note:** This report is a reflection of responses collected in the survey and not a final decision. For fee policy talking points, see page 7.

Proposed Fee Answers (write in)



Minimum

\$5 No Change

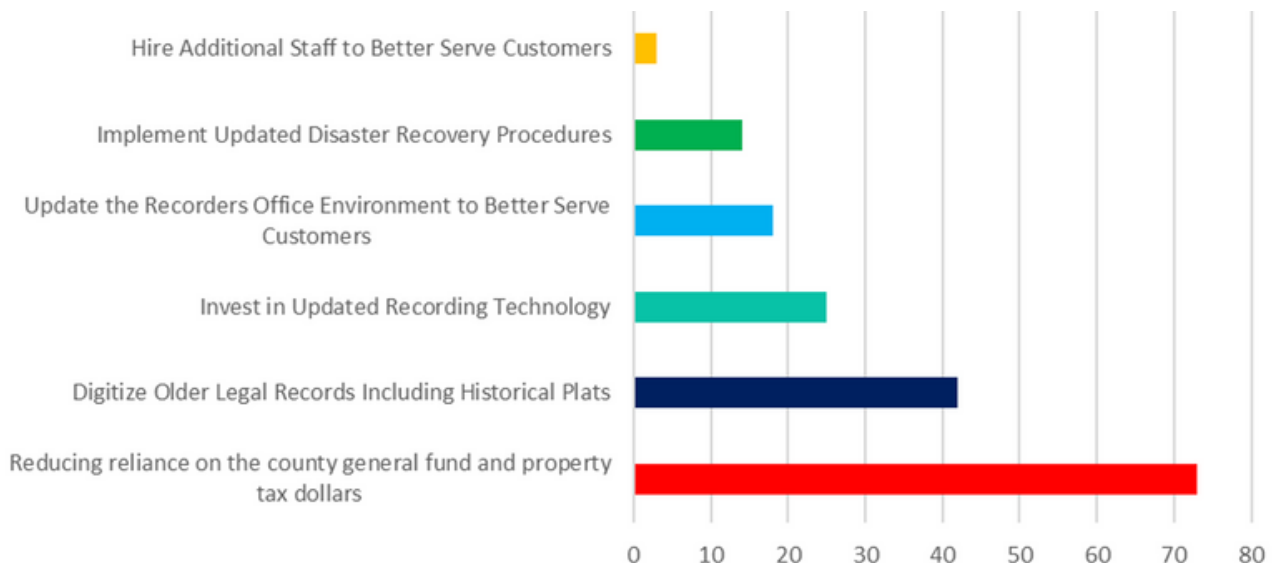
Median
(50th percentile)

\$9.78

Maximum

\$20

"Where would the extra user-fee be applied?" (multiple choice)



FEE POLICY SURVEY RESULTS

“How do you think your local stakeholders and legislators would react?”

- General expectation of adjustment
- Reasonable and necessity of the increase
- Initial resistance and eventual understanding
- Importance of effective communication
- Practical Implications and comparisons
- Strategies for gaining acceptance
- Overall reluctance and rational understanding

Expectation of the Working Group

- ☒ Feedback and involvement
- ☒ Advocacy and justification
- ☒ Transparency and explanation
- ☒ Focus on fiscal responsibility

Research and
compare fees

Incremental fee
increase and stability

Caution and
communication

Specific fee
structure suggestions



1985 - 2023 INFLATION RATES

1 Page Rates

\$7 in 1985

\$20.02 in 2023

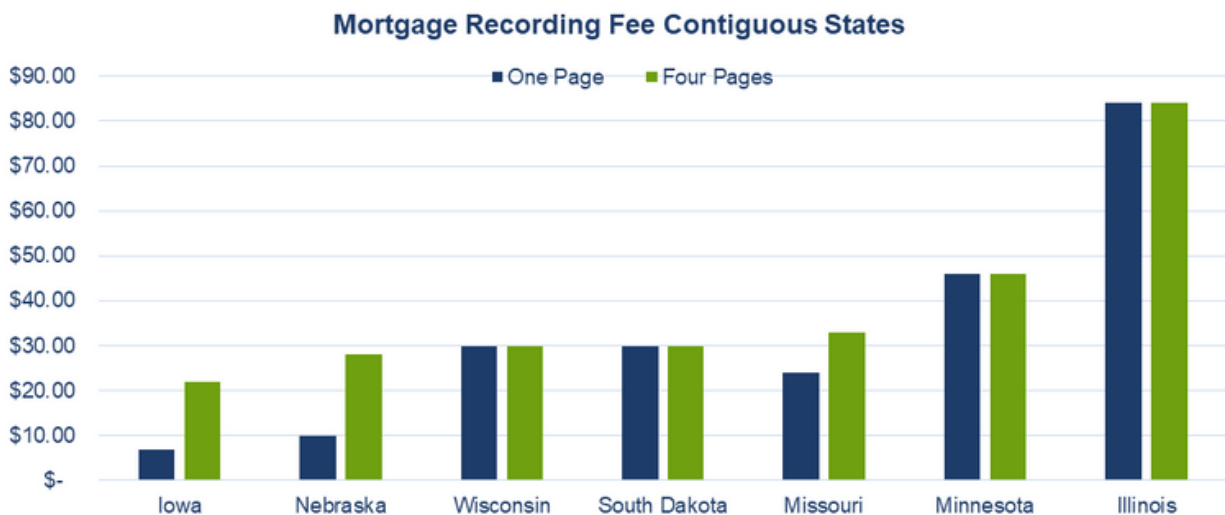
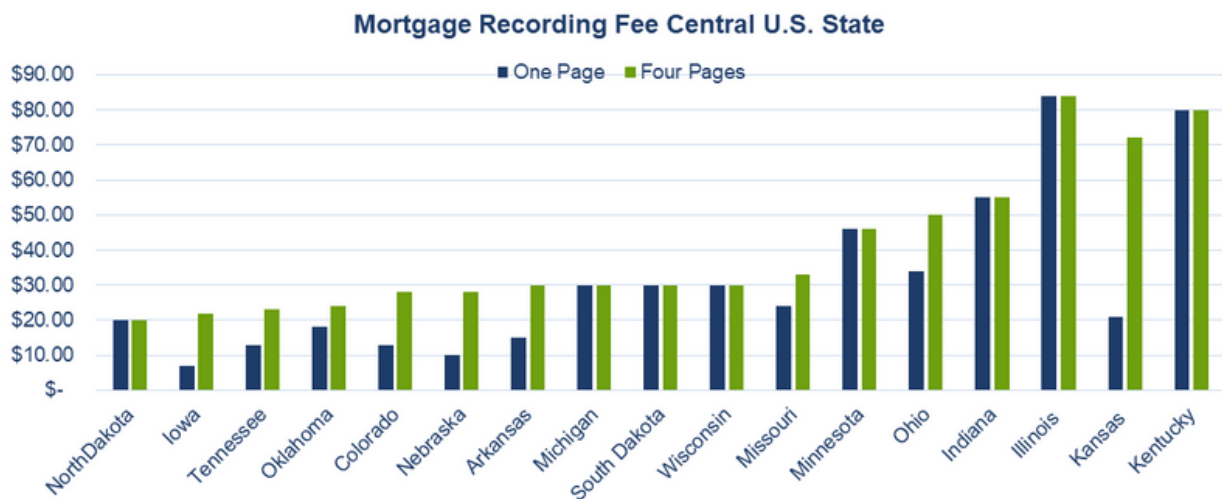
4 Page Rates

\$22 in 1985

\$62.91 in 2023

OTHER STATE FEE POLICIES

The graphs below illustrate fee comparisons with contiguous states and other states in the central United States. Iowa has the lowest recording fees.



STAKEHOLDER TALKING POINTS

This page is intended as a guide for County Recorders in Iowa. The following talking points were created in partnership with ESS and the Fee Policy Working Group to advance discussion about the Recording Fee and Modernization Initiative. For questions, please contact Census Lo-liyong at clo-liyong@clris.com.

A Possible Conversation

- Have you heard about our Association's "modernization" initiative?
- It's a proposal we're planning to bring forward in 2025.
- We're looking to modernize our recording services with an investment of a reasonable adjustment in recording user fees.
- The Association is engaging with our stakeholders to identify areas of improvement.
- User fees are fees that are paid to cover the recording of a real estate transaction.
- Did you know that Iowa recording fees haven't been updated since 1985? Almost forty years! Iowa fees are the lowest among central states, as seen in the graphs provided.
- What are the proposed fee changes? Still being planned, but likely less than the rate of inflation.
- An adjustment in these user fees is needed to allow for investment in the planned modernization efforts. The plans are being developed now and more information should be available soon! When ready, I'll reach out to you.

ADVOCACY CHALLENGE

OCTOBER	Make A List Compile a list of 10-20 key stakeholders that use your office services frequently. Refer to the OCTOBER Iowa Land Records newsletter for the complete list of suggestions.
NOVEMBER	Send A Greeting Card The Holiday Season is here, send a greeting card to 10-key stakeholders in your county (October's Challenge). Perhaps this is your first time reaching out and this could be a way to introduce yourself.
DECEMBER	Regroup & Start An Outreach Log Celebrate your accomplishments, & start your advocacy outreach plan, start your advocacy communications log.
JANUARY	Sign up for the Advocacy Kickoff Sign up for the virtual event hosted on February 7 at 9 a.m. https://iowalandrecords.org/form-advocacy-webinar-sign-up/
FEBRUARY	Attend Kickoff & Develop Key Messages Participants report on advocacy challenges, communications and develop key messaging for their community's needs.