

PROVIDING FOR EXPENSES OF THE OFFICES OF RECORDER OF  
DEEDS AND REGISTER OF WILLS OF THE DISTRICT OF  
COLUMBIA

---

MARCH 3, 1926.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state  
of the Union and ordered to be printed

---

Mr. ZIHLMAN, from the Committee on the District of Columbia,  
submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 9685]

The Committee on the District of Columbia, to which was referred the bill (H. R. 9685) providing for expenses of the offices of recorder of deeds and register of wills of the District of Columbia, having considered the same report it back to the House with the following amendment, with the recommendation that the amendment be agreed to and the bill do pass:

Page 2, section 2, line 5, after the word "for" insert the words "a suitable record building, for the office of the recorder of deeds, and for."

The provisions of this bill abolish the fee system in the offices of the recorder of deeds and the register of wills of the District of Columbia, these being the last two administrative offices which are still conducted under the fee system.

Congress has been gradually abolishing the use of fees for the support of offices and requiring the covering of all moneys into the Treasury and the submission of estimates and the granting of appropriations in the usual manner for the conduct of all administrative offices.

A letter from Hon. Martin B. Madden, chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, is submitted herewith.

FEBRUARY 23, 1926.

HON. F. N. ZIHLMAN,  
*Chairman Committee on the District of Columbia,  
House of Representatives.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I have to-day introduced a bill authorizing annual appropriations for the support of the offices of recorder of deeds and register of wills of the District. They are now supported from the fees of the offices and

## 2 EXPENSES OF RECORDER OF DEEDS AND REGISTER OF WILLS

are the last of the large offices which are not on an annual appropriation basis. Congress has gradually been abolishing the use of fees for the support of offices both under the District and the Federal Government and requiring the submission of estimates and the granting of appropriations in the usual manner accompanied by a covering of the fees into the Treasury undiminished by any administrative authority. The purpose of the bill is in the interest of sound legislative and administrative practice. As the offices are now run under the law, the recorder and register have the right to use the fees to pay the expenses of the offices and at the end of the fiscal year if there is any residue it is covered into the Treasury to the credit of the District. Very little is ever turned in.

The fees are fixed by statute and were prescribed many years ago. If you approve of the bill it might be feasible to increase the rates somewhat in view of the greatly increased costs of recent years of performing the services which the two offices should give the public. I believe that on annual appropriations better service will be rendered, particularly in the recorder's office, which is in arrears.

Very truly yours,

MARTIN B. MADDEN, *Chairman.*

The amendment gives authority for the erection of a suitable record building for the recorder of deeds office. The great need for a building of this character has repeatedly been brought to the attention of Congress. Not only are the present quarters congested to an extent that is unbelievable, but the office is seriously hampered in the conduct of public business by lack of space and the records of the office are exposed to destruction by fire or by theft, and provision should be made for the funds necessary to erect a building of this character.

○