

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

September 21, 2026

The Honorable Shira Perlmutter
Register of Copyrights and Director
U.S. Copyright Office
Washington, DC 20559-6000

Dear Register Perlmutter:

We write as Co-Chairs and members of the Bipartisan Congressional Real Estate Caucus to express our concern with the U.S. Copyright Office's final fee schedule submitted to Congress on July 14, 2026. In particular, the proposal would increase the fee for group registration of updates and revisions to non-photographic databases - the category used by many Multiple Listing Services (MLSs) - from \$500 to \$700 per filing. This comes only six years after the same fee increased from \$85 to \$500. We urge the Office to reconsider this additional increase before it takes effect.

MLSs are a critical part of America's housing market. These organizations maintain the property information used every day by buyers, sellers, real estate professionals, lenders, and appraisers. They are also generally small, local, subscriber-supported organizations, not large corporations that can simply absorb repeated cost increases. Because MLS databases are continuously updated, many MLSs must register multiple times each year to maintain meaningful copyright protection against unauthorized scraping, copying, and misuse.

The proposed increase is especially difficult to justify because MLSs remain stuck using a more expensive paper-based registration process while nearly all other copyright applicants can file electronically. The Office's own analysis reportedly places the cost of processing an MLS registration at approximately \$500, yet the proposed fee is \$700. It makes little sense to charge MLSs above the reported cost of providing the service while denying them access to the lower-cost, modern filing system available to other registrants. Local MLSs should not be forced to subsidize a bureaucratic process they cannot avoid or modernization efforts from which they do not yet benefit.

We support a modern, efficient Copyright Office and recognize the need to recover reasonable costs. But fees should be fair, recover the reasonable cost of the service being provided, and structured to encourage -- not discourage -- copyright registration. Stakeholders have warned that MLS registrations are price sensitive and have already declined as fees have increased. At a time when Americans are facing serious housing affordability challenges, Washington should be looking for ways to reduce unnecessary costs in the housing market, not add to them.

Accordingly, we respectfully ask the Copyright Office to:

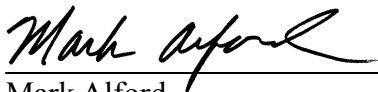
1. Reconsider or delay the proposed increase from \$500 to \$700 and explain how that amount is justified when the Office's reported processing cost is approximately \$500, including how the fee complies with the fair-and-equitable requirements of 17 U.S.C. § 708(b)(4);
2. Explain how the Office interprets 17 U.S.C. § 708(b) and [H. Rept. 105-25](#) to permit charging MLS registrants more than the Office's reported cost of processing MLS registrations, and identify the principles the Office applies in determining when and by how much a fee may exceed cost;

3. Explain why the Office lacks authority to delay or modify the proposed MLS fee increase, despite having done so for other proposed fees in prior proceedings, and explain any legal or procedural constraints that would prevent it from doing so in this case;
4. Provide a concrete plan and timeline for allowing MLS registrations to be filed electronically, including any technological or administrative barriers that remain; and
5. Explain how the Office accounted for stakeholder evidence that MLSs are generally small, local organizations, that registrations are price sensitive, and that prior fee increases have already reduced participation.

Congress has a 120-day review period, through November 12, to approve or disapprove the new fee schedule. During that time, we urge the Office to work with MLS stakeholders on a reasonable alternative that lowers processing costs, expands electronic access, and preserves strong copyright protections without imposing another disproportionate fee increase.

Please respond within 14 days of receipt of this letter. We appreciate your prompt attention to this matter and look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,



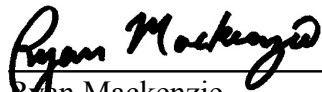
Mark Alford
Member of Congress



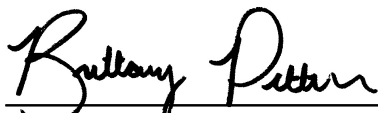
J. Luis Correa
Member of Congress



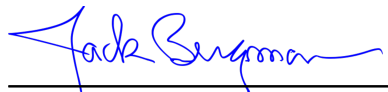
Tracey Mann
Member of Congress



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