SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 2174 (Johnson) - Mobilehomes and manufactured housing: registration and titling documentation

Version: April 27, 2026
Policy Vote: HOUSING 10 - 0, JUD. 13 - 0
Urgency: No
Mandate: No
Hearing Date: August 3, 2026
Consultant: Mark McKenzie

Bill Summary: AB 2174 would require the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), on or after January 1, 2028, to accept a verified electronic signature on a document submitted to release or satisfy a security interest held by a legal owner of a mobile or manufactured home.

Fiscal Impact:
- HCD estimates one-time costs in the range of $100,000 to $250,000 to make necessary IT system improvements to integrate software into its existing systems to enable acceptance of electronic signatures. (General Fund)

Background: Existing law, the Manufactured Housing Act of 1980, establishes the titling and registration requirements for all manufactured homes, mobilehomes, commercial modulars, truck campers, and floating homes. HCD keeps a permanent title record for each home, which identifies the registered owner, any legal owner, such as a lender, and key information about the unit. When a mobilehome or manufactured home is first sold, brought into the state, or otherwise transferred, the new owner or dealer must apply to HCD for registration and a title. Existing law requires submission of appropriate documents, fees, and, when a dealer is involved, a report of sale. After processing the application, HCD issues two primary documents: a certificate of title, which reflects legal ownership and any secured interests recorded against the home; and a registration card showing the registered owner and basic identifying information. Registration must be renewed annually with payment of fees, while the certificate of title remains in effect until there is a change in ownership or a lien is added or released. Existing law also requires that ownership changes, lien recordings, and other title-related transactions be promptly reported to HCD using signed title documents and supporting paperwork. HCD then updates the permanent title record and issues revised documents as needed.

HCD has adopted an electronic signature policy that allows the use of electronic signatures in certain programs and transactions, consistent with California's Uniform Electronic Transactions Act (UETA) and state law. This policy is primarily used for grants, contracts, and administrative documents, where HCD has determined that electronic signatures are reliable and appropriate. The department has not extended its electronic signature policy to its mobilehome and manufactured housing registration and titling system. In practice, HCD continues to require original signatures for key title documents, particularly those affecting ownership or security interests. As a result, lien releases generally must be executed with original 'wet' signatures on the certificate of title or approved forms, and electronic signatures are typically not accepted for that purpose.

Proposed Law: AB 2174 would require HCD, on or after January 1, 2028, to accept a verified signature executed electronically on a document submitted to release or satisfy a security interest held by a legal owner of a mobile or manufactured home, commercial modular, truck camper, or floating home, as specified. The bill requires HCD to treat an electronic signature as having the same force and effect as the original signature, and prohibits HCD from requiring submission of an original wet signature to release or satisfy a legal owner's security interest, as specified.

Staff Comments: To implement this bill, HCD indicates that it would need to integrate compliant software into the Codes and Standards Online Services system and procure public key infrastructure contracts. Based on current data, HCD estimates that it would process as many as 35,000 electronic signatures annually for documents necessary to release or satisfy a security interest held by a legal owner of a mobile or manufactured home. HCD estimates total costs related to this bill would be in the range of $100,000 to $250,000.

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