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*For Immediate Release*

## **End Adverse Possession Now Endorses New Washington State Bill to Stop Legalized Land Theft**

### ***Landmark Legislation, House Bill 1479, Stands to Abolish Repugnant Law of Adverse Possession***

**SEATTLE – September 15, 2009** – Sitting with the Washington State House Judiciary Committee is a landmark bill, House Bill 1479, that stands to eliminate the practice of legalized land theft, otherwise known as adverse possession. With a mission to abolish adverse possession, End Adverse Possession Now today announced its official endorsement of House Bill 1479 and urges those in Washington to contact their representatives and those who comprise the House Judiciary Committee to support passage of this historic bill.

The bill evidences a manifest change in public policy as outraged citizens call for abolition; voicing affirmations that adverse possession is an outdated, unnecessary and unfair law. Drafted by Representatives Orcutt, Blake, McCune, Herrera, and Hudgins, HB 1479 is “an act relating to the prohibition of adverse possession claims.” It “provides that an action to quiet title may not be supported by a statutory or common law claim of adverse possession.”

Arcane and unknown to many people, adverse possession is a legal fiction that stretches back more than 800 years. It originates from a medieval common law doctrine where a person who uses the land of another for a period of time becomes the owner of that property, defeating all rights of the true owner. In other words, it is a way to take land from another without paying for it.

“Times have changed, society has changed, technology has changed, and now it is time for the law to change,” says Christopher McKie, Founder of End Adverse Possession Now. “Adverse possession is nothing more than legal weasel words used to justify stealing someone else’s property. This bill, HB 1479, is exactly what the public wants – a permanent end to legalized land theft.”

#### **Adverse Possession Needs to End Now**

Much like laws of slavery, dowry and other abandoned laws that society has found to be repugnant, the justification for having adverse possession no longer applies today. Adverse possession claims undermine public faith and confidence in official land recording systems, fair payment of land taxes, and even contradicts the U.S. Constitution’s Fifth Amendment “takings” clause, which provides that if the government takes property, it must provide “just compensation.” Fundamental fairness simply does not apply to claims of adverse possession, which explains why citizens cannot steal land from the government under adverse

possession. The government is protected from legalized land theft, but ordinary citizens have no recourse or protection. This is why HB 1479 needs to pass now and put an end to adverse possession claims.

### **Washington State House Judiciary Committee – Catalysts or Bottlenecks to Change**

At this time, House Bill 1479 is sitting with the House Judiciary Committee, which is chaired by Rep. Jamie Pedersen ([Pedersen.jamie@leg.wa.gov](mailto:Pedersen.jamie@leg.wa.gov)), who despite his progressive views for positive social change, appears to be in favor of legalized land theft.

Other Committee members include: Reps. Roger Goodman ([goodman.roger@leg.wa.gov](mailto:goodman.roger@leg.wa.gov)), Jay Rodne ([rodne.jay@leg.wa.gov](mailto:rodne.jay@leg.wa.gov)), Matt Shea ([shea.matt@leg.wa.gov](mailto:shea.matt@leg.wa.gov)), Dennis Flannigan ([flannigan.dennis@leg.wa.gov](mailto:flannigan.dennis@leg.wa.gov)), Troy Kelley ([kelly.troy@leg.wa.gov](mailto:kelly.troy@leg.wa.gov)), Steve Kirby ([kirby.steve@leg.wa.gov](mailto:kirby.steve@leg.wa.gov)), Timm Ormsby ([ormsby.timm@leg.wa.gov](mailto:ormsby.timm@leg.wa.gov)), Mary Helen Roberts ([roberts.maryhelen@leg.wa.gov](mailto:roberts.maryhelen@leg.wa.gov)), Charles Ross ([ross.charles@leg.wa.gov](mailto:ross.charles@leg.wa.gov)), and Judy Warnick ([warnick.judy@leg.wa.gov](mailto:warnick.judy@leg.wa.gov)).

End Adverse Possession Now urges the public to contact these members as well as their local representatives and voice support for HB 1479. These people can either be the catalysts or the bottlenecks to changing history and doing the right thing.

“I have seen the cost and headaches suffered by homeowners as they try to defend their property from taking via adverse possession and the resulting heartache when they lost it anyway – for no valid reason,” says the bill’s prime sponsor, Rep Ed Orcutt (R) Kalama. “It is a law that made sense in ancient times but has little or no value today. It is an issue which needs to be addressed by the legislature to fit modern times – before it tears apart more families and neighborhoods.”

### **End Adverse Possession Now**

Founded in 2009, End Adverse Possession Now (EAP NOW) is an organization dedicated to the abolition of adverse possession. With public support, EAP NOW works with legislators and their staff, administrative bodies, industry associations and other organizations to eradicate laws of adverse possession in all U.S. jurisdictions. Go to: [www.eapnow.org](http://www.eapnow.org) or <http://EndAdversePossession.blogspot.com/> for more information. A community forum is also available at: [www.eapnow.org/phpbb](http://www.eapnow.org/phpbb).

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