



The manufactured housing industry has long been a mainstay of affordable housing in the United States. For decades the industry has provided an unmatched quality of life with an affordability not seen in any other sector of the housing market. The homes and the land lease communities in which they are situated have become fixtures across the country providing an affordable, quality lifestyle to all segments of our population. Over the years it has seen its ups and downs, but has been able to survive and even thrive through the difficult times. The greatest hindrance and the greatest threat to the industry is not the economy, the homes or the communities, it is governmental interference and over regulation.

The Manufactured Housing Communities of Arizona (MHCA) is a statewide association representing community owners in Arizona. As state associations do, the MHCA has been very active and productive at the state level in combatting governmental interference with its burdensome regulations and obstacles. At the state level most community owner associations have been able to not only monitor proposed local and statewide legislation, but interact with legislators to prevent onerous regulations that are detrimental to our industry.

The MHCA had joined a national association in hopes that we would get the same representation and effectiveness at a national level. The national legislation and rule making over the last ten years has proven that we do not have that representation. One only has to look at the passage of the Safe Act and the Dodd-Frank Act to see how devastating and onerous national legislation can be. Other similar chattel groups (the RV industry) saw the proposals and their representation managed to have them exempted. The national organization to which we belonged was apparently unaware of the legislation and its ramifications until after passage and it was already being implemented. The rule making in the aftermath has been horrendous and little if anything has been done to stop the bleeding. Recently, HUD has issued rules concerning the screening of prospective tenants for our communities. Again, we find no one aware of what is happening, much less advocating on our behalf. Installation requirements are being implemented that have no basis in common sense and the result will be additional burdens on community owners and added costs for homeowners.

Due to the lack of effective representation at a national level, the MHCA withdrew its membership from the national association to pursue other avenues of representation. We are not the only state association to do so. The MHCA has been exploring other options; including hiring a lobbying firm that is prominent in Washington, D.C.

In some cases, the state associations represent community owners only and in others there is a single association representing all aspects of the industry. We need a national association to advocate on behalf of community owners. It does not need to be an association with conferences to attend or one that requires numerous meetings and publications. Such an association needs to be very narrowly focused on monitoring proposed legislation and rule making. We need someone to advocate on behalf of the community owners. This singular task needs to be done at the congressional level and in the departments that make policy affecting our industry. Every community owner, and every association that is accepting membership dues from community owners, should be concerned with the lack of representation at the national level and should be involved in finding adequate representation. If you are willing to be a part of the solution, please contact our association office.

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You may also email our Executive Director Susan Brenton at: sbrenton@azmhca.com.

Thank you for your consideration on how you can help shape the future of our industry.

Sincerely,

Neal T Haney, President