



Community Advocacy Network Opposes Anti-Consumer Measures in Florida HB 5005 'Deregulation Bill'

HB 5005 Threatens Florida Condos, Coops, HOAs & Other Community Associations Statewide with 'Deregulated Chaos, Abuse & Mismanagement'

Ft. Lauderdale, FL (Vocus/PRWEB) March 22, 2011 -- The Community Advocacy Network (CAN, www.canfl.com), Florida's leading advocate for the interests of millions of community association residents statewide, has called on Florida's State Legislature to strike anti-consumer provisions in the HB 5005 "Deregulation Bill" currently under consideration in Tallahassee.

"A number of anti-community association provisions of HB 5005 threaten to plunge Florida condominiums, cooperatives, HOAs and other community associations into a downward spiral of deregulated chaos, abuse and mismanagement that would seriously undermine residential property values in our State," said [Donna DiMaggio Berger, Executive Director, Community Advocacy Network](#).

[HB 5005, currently on a "fast track" for approval](#) as a budgetary implementing bill that will bypass committee consideration in the State Senate, the legislation would eliminate condominium oversight, alternative dispute resolution and community association manager licensing. It would also completely eliminate the Condominium Ombudsman's office, which plays a critical role in mediating and resolving condominium disputes statewide, as well as the State's only community association regulatory agency, the Division of Florida Condominiums, Timeshares and Mobile Homes.

CAN encourages Floridians to contact their State legislators by phone or e-mail today to urge them to remove these anti-community association provisions from HB 5005. State Senator and local Representative contact details can be easily found online by using the Zip Code search tool at <http://www.flsenate.gov/Senators/Find>.

The Community Advocacy Network, typically an advocate for less regulation of community associations, strongly opposes the anti-community association provisions of HB 5005 on the following grounds:

- Unlike other affected industries in this 318-page bill, Community Associations are NOT for-profit businesses; they are not-for-profit organizations.
- The regulations in the community association industry differ significantly from regulations in for-profit industries. Not-for-profit regulations are not barriers to competition. The sole purpose of these regulations is to protect Floridians living in these communities, most of whom are seniors.
- Community Association regulations ensure transparency, accountability and fairness when dealing with people's homes and money.
- Removing critical consumer protections will simply leave homeowners more vulnerable to fraud and on the hook for expensive legal costs.
- These provisions WILL have a fiscal impact on the state. Florida's arbitration program for condominiums reduces costs to the courts. Judges pushed to have the Division handle arbitrations because their dockets were filled with "condo commando" disputes, which were more effectively and less expensively handled in



arbitration.

- In addition to eliminating 118 jobs, this legislation would loot \$6.1 million in trust fund fees paid by associations.

Floridians opposed to the anti-community association provisions of HB should contact their State legislators by phone or e-mail today to urge them to remove these anti-community association provisions from HB 5005. State Senator and local Representative contact details can be easily found online by using the Zip Code search tool at <http://www.flsenate.gov/Senators/Find>.

The Community Advocacy Network was founded in 2007 by the Florida law firm of Katzman Garfinkel & Berger to provide education, advocacy and outreach services to community associations statewide and promote positive community association legislation, while advising legislators to resist the urge to micromanage and over-regulate private residential communities.

Membership in the Community Advocacy Network (CAN) is open to all Florida community associations, including condominiums, co-operatives, homeowner associations, timeshares and mobile home communities. For more information about the benefits of CAN membership and the organization's activities around the State, please contact Diane Schick at [dschick\(at\)kgblawfirm\(dot\)com](mailto:dschick(at)kgblawfirm(dot)com) or by phone at 954-848-3937.

About Community Advocacy Network (CAN):

The Community Advocacy Network (CAN) is the leading statewide advocacy network dedicated to promoting positive community association legislation while advising legislators to resist the urge to micromanage and over-regulate private residential communities. CAN works through its website, email alerts and tools such as the "Capitol Connection" email system to give association leaders and residents the information and resources they need to play a meaningful part in the legislative process before harmful bills are passed. Capitol Connection enables our members to contact their elected officials at every level of government with just the click of a button. For more information, visit www.canfl.com or call 954-315-0372.

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