



2019 End of Session Report

Now that the Minnesota Legislature has adjourned the 2019 legislative session, the Community Associations Institute's (CAI) Minnesota Legislative Action Committee (MN-LAC) has already turned its sights to 2020. Volunteer MN-LAC members met monthly during the legislative session to review legislation impacting or potentially impact community associations in Minnesota and to provide feedback to the MN-LAC lobbyist. The MN-LAC also provided valuable insight to legislators and stakeholder groups on issues related to common interest communities (CICs) in Minnesota, establishing the MN-LAC as the go-to voice for CICs in the state.

Legislative Focus

Minnesota is the only state in the nation to have a divided Legislature, with the Democrats holding a sizeable advantage in the House (75-55) and the Republicans holding a slim advantage in the Senate (35-32). The Minnesota House introduced 2,921 bills in 2019 while the Minnesota Senate introduced 2,925. Bills not signed into law or voted down may be acted on by the 2020 Legislature, which will continue to introduce bills when they convene on February 11, 2020. Working with newly-elected Democratic Governor Tim Walz, the Legislature was able to pass a two-year state budget with the help of a one-day special session, but there were few significant housing policy provisions passed into law. One exception was in the area of manufactured homes, where a number of provisions contained in the Omnibus Agriculture, Housing Finance Omnibus Bill (Ch. 1, 2019 Special Session Laws) were enacted, including provisions to allow modular homes to be a part of manufactured home parks and to allow cities to establish Housing Improvement Areas (HIAs) in manufactured home parks.

In recent years there were several controversial bills introduced related to manager licensing, reserve requirements, and restricting the ability of boards of directors to initiate legal action on behalf of their members. Thankfully, none of these issues were introduced in 2019, allowing CICs some time to come to grips with the impact of law changes in passed in 2017.

Looking Ahead to 2020

MN-LAC members have identified an issue that continues to cause problems for CICs in Minnesota: governing documents that require unanimous or near-unanimous votes of homeowners to pass any amendment can prevent associations from properly maintaining their properties or to even amend documents to comply with state and federal law. The MN-LAC has started to examine the feasibility of drafting and introducing legislation in the 2020 legislative session that would provide CICs with onerous amendment requirements a way to amend governing documents while maintaining the due process of homeowners and mortgage interest holders.

Passing legislation is a significant endeavor that will require many hours of volunteer time not only from MN-LAC members, but from other members of CAI-MN as well. CAI members working with the MN-LAC's lobbyist will need to draft legislation, secure bill authors, develop support from committee members, and work with numerous interest groups that could potentially be impacted by the legislation. If successful, such legislation could provide an important tool for CICs in Minnesota to continue to meet the needs of their homeowner members and ensure the future viability of their homes and investments.

For more information on the MN LAC's activities and community association legislation in Minnesota, visit www.caionline.org/MNLAC.

Your Assistance is Needed

The CAI Minnesota LAC uses professional, paid lobbyists as a vital and integral part of the legislative process. As volunteers, CAI MN LAC members significantly rely on this highly effective professional representation. To help fund the CAI MN LAC advocacy activities in 2019 and beyond, donations are vital to our continued successes. We encourage donations from Minnesota community associations and individuals. Please visit www.caionline.org/lacdonate/ and donate to "Minnesota" to support our continued efforts.

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