

**FINANCE-GENERAL GOVERNMENT & AGENCY REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE**

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**ASSOCIATION OF MANUFACTURED HOME RESIDENTS IN OHIO (AMHRO)**

**MAY 18, 2017**

**SUB HB 49--MAINTAIN OHIO MANUFACTURED HOMES COMMISSION EXISTING LAW  
AS RESTORED BY THE HOUSE**

Chairman Jordan, Vice Chair O'Brien and members of the Committee

I am here to support the Ohio Manufactured Homes Commission ("Commission") because it benefits the manufactured home owner. It begins with 100% of home installations done by trained and licensed installers, and then inspected by certified professional inspectors. The biggest short comings of the much older mobile homes built prior to the initiation of the federal pre-emptive construction and fire safety code regulated today by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development ("HUD") is that they were not properly tied down to good foundations. In Ohio, interpretation of a "proper installation" was done by the 250 building departments in the state. There was no single authority, backed by "engineering expertise", to set a "consistent standard" for the entire state. I want to emphasize these two terms, "engineering expertise" and "consistent standard". The lack of both has a negative effect on the mobile/manufactured home owner.

Forty years ago, HUD was given authority to set engineering standards for building and installing the new manufactured homes of today, setting higher requirements for safety, energy efficiency and a consumer oriented home. Those requirements are under constant review and updated by the HUD Manufactured Housing Consensus Committee. Yet today, in the mind of the public and some in government the much better manufactured home of today is the same as the older trailer/mobile home of a long time ago.

The new budget discussions today have provided the opportunity to correct some of this misinformation. Recent news articles about tragic home fires, pictured several older pre HUD mobile homes were used as an indictment of unsafe manufactured housing. First; any older mobile home built prior to the HUD code cannot be compared to that today's manufactured homes, not on safety, efficiency or convenience. That's true for anything from autos to washing machines and it certainly applies to all housing.

There are 62 national product and construction standards in the HUD manufactured home construction laws, the same ones as required in all residential construction. Example ANSI/NFPA 223, National Fuel Gas Code; ANSI AFFA NDS, the National Design for Wood Construction; ASTM C1396M-14, Standard Specifications for Gypsum Board along with 59 more national codes. All are appropriate codes to build the larger and safer modern manufactured house of today.

This larger, and by extension, heavier house requires a much better foundation with a tie down system to provide safety for the occupants and prevent damage to the building. This is why the Manufactured Homes Commission program of 100% installation inspection is so important. It was a revolution in the industry for the Commission to require every home to be inspected before occupancy; working from one set of standards, based on professional engineers with manufactured housing experience. There are multiple types of manufactured

home foundations, cement block piers, piers over 36 inches, block and poured cement walls and basements. Terrain, soil conditions and flood plains further complicate foundation design.

Before the Commission, good foundations and tie downs were not universal with every installation. Workmanship and materials were not always equal to the job. What are the practical implications for the home's occupant from an inadequate installation? Cracked drywall, windows and doors that do not open or close properly and winds that can blow houses off its foundation. Severe thunderstorms can generate winds of 100 mph.

As residents, we in AMHRO, and others want our manufactured homes to be recognized as modern safe housing that is worthy of better insurance and mortgage rates. We want the enforcement of higher community standards where roads, water and sewer systems are kept in good condition. The value of our homes and community can increase, this will be a financial benefit to the homeowner and we can be an asset to our local government. Our best hope is the Ohio Manufactured Commission.

From my Commission information folder, January 25th 2006, was an article from Modern Homes, a "voice of the manufactured and modular housing industry"; stating that on May 7th, 2004 Governor Bob Taft sign legislation creating the Commission, an independent, stand-alone commission to develop a statewide installation and foundation program. The article also stated "that since the Ohio Manufactured Homes Commission is not housed in a large government agency, decision-making will be quick, efficient and free from political consideration, bureaucratic delays and micromanagement". The Commission has proven this true.

I worked in the auto industry as an electrician, skilled trade's supervisor and plant engineer. Most of my work was in machine and manufacturing process controls building and design. There are many parallels between autos and manufactured housing, since most Americans make their biggest investments in these two areas. Both industries made revolutionary changes beginning in the mid -seventies that greatly increased the quality and value of their products. With autos, it was 100 % inspections that improved quality. With manufactured housing it is inspections at the factory and in Ohio it is the OMHC that insures the customer is getting the safety and quality they expect.