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Good afternoon, Chairwoman Gavarone, Vice Chair O'Brien, Ranking Member Maharath and Members of the Senate Local Government and Elections Committee. Thank you for allowing me to give testimony today in support of SB 61.

My name is Darcy Mehling Good. Professionally, I am an attorney and have dedicated my entire 23+ year career to representing Ohio's condominium and homeowner associations. I am also a member of the Community Associations Institute and have been an active member of its Legislative Action Committee. The Community Associations Institute (CAI) is a national organization that works for the betterment of community associations through its local chapters, including 3 in Ohio, and promotes legislation to improve Ohio's condominium and homeowner associations. Last, but certainly not least, I was an owner and resident in a condominium association, serving as Board Secretary for 6 years.

On behalf of the Ohio Legislative Action Committee for CAI and from my personal and professional experiences, I am here today to voice my strong support for this Senate Bill 61, for which I appreciate the opportunity to collaborate with Sen. Blessing and his staff to produce. By working together over the last two years, SB 61 not only addresses the concerns of his constituents regarding solar panel installations, but significantly updates both ORC 5311 and 5312 to clarify

and improve a number of other operational issues that have challenged condominium and homeowner associations, homeowners, and residents.

SB 61 strengthens a number of consumer protection provisions by:

- permitting associations to send and receive official notices, via electronic communications, regarding meetings, violations, and enforcement proceedings to owners, who have authorized its use;
- prohibiting a majority of the board to be represented by owners of the same unit or lot;
- recognizing an association's ability to preserve and protect its owners' property values by engaging in civil discourse regarding zoning and similar issues;
- balancing owners' right to inspect association records with the duty to protect privacy rights of individual owners; **and**
- clarifying the requirements for associations to budget and fund reserves to better reduce, if not eliminate, the need to levy special assessments against owners.

Finally, and arguably, most importantly, SB 61 helps to protect members' "wallets" by requiring associations to carry fidelity insurance against loss of theft of the associations' funds and establishing a continuing lien for condominiums as has been law for homeowner associations since 2010 to ensure that liens for past assessments also secure ongoing fees that remain unpaid. As associations build their reserves so to comply with the law for Ohio's condominiums and homeowner associations in effect 2004 and 2010, respectively, it is paramount that the funds be properly insured against loss or theft and SB 61 achieves that.

In the previous General Assembly, this bill's predecessor, SB 289, passed unanimously out of committee and from the Senate Floor and we are hopeful that it garners similar support this time.

Thank you, again, Chair Gavarone and Members of the Committee, for your consideration of SB 61 and this opportunity to speak in support of it. I am happy to answer any questions from the committee.