

AMHRO

(Association of Manufactured Home Residents in Ohio)
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OHIO SENATE
FINANCE COMMITTEE

FRANK POJMAN, PRESIDENT
ASSOCIATION OF MANUFACTURED HOME RESIDENTS IN OHIO (AMHRO)
JUNE 15, 2017

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

My name is Frank Pojman, President of the Association of Manufactured Home Residents in Ohio (AMHRO) and also the Columbia Park Homeowners/Tenants Association, a manufactured home community located in Olmsted Township near Cleveland. Columbia Park is the largest community in Ohio with 1,500 homeowners and a 55 plus community with many seniors living on fixed incomes.

AMHRO supports the House passed version of the state budget (Sub HB 49) maintaining the Manufactured Homes Commission ("Commission") as in present law.

When the legislation to create the Commission was being debated many years ago, I was adamantly opposed to the Commission formation. However, after all these years of experience with the Commission we are able to obtain quick and reliable service for our residents' especially involving home safety and park living complaints. When I initially opposed the creation of the Commission it was because I did not understand how it could help the residents of Ohio.

Manufactured homes are the safest and most affordable type of housing on the market today. The Commission has been a big reason for that due to its 100% inspection of manufactured homes safety installations and manufactured home parks with tedious follow up of any violations. In fact prior to the Commission there were 500-800 improper home installation complaints annually. Under the Commission, however, less than ten complaints have occurred in the last three years. That's superior homeowner protection!

In recent statements released to the media by the Kasich Administration it was stated, "*Ohio Gov. John Kasich believes too many people are dying in manufactured homes*". More concerning is the statement that, "*Mobile Homes are some of the most dangerous, most unhealthy places to live in Ohio.*"

These statements are demeaning and disrespectful to the 900,000 Ohioans living in manufactured homes. This implies our homes are unsafe and our residents live in an unclean manner. My phone is ringing non-stop as these careless and factually incorrect statements are scaring our residents.

I will assume the Governor has been misled by the agencies who want to take control of the Commission. As you have heard and will hear from others the Administration's inflammatory rhetoric is not backed up by facts but instead recites outdated stereotypes and prejudices.

Manufactured housing in Ohio is one of the most affordable ways to own your own home. For those living in a manufactured home park the downside is we pay a lot rental to have our home on their property. That is not a bad thing, unless you have park owners who attempt to skirt the law. This is where the Commission comes in to play. AMHRO will receive a call from a homeowner with a concern in their community. AMHRO contacts the Commission they work with us to immediately provide honest and reliable answers we trust.

The Board of Commissioners is made up of various manufactured homes segments with decades of knowledge and expertise. Contrary to the statements by the Department of Commerce Director, the six industry appointees have been among the most reputable in the industry and have strongly supported homeowner and resident protections that exceed the federally mandated standards by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

However, I am deeply concerned the Governor has failed to appoint a resident for more than two years and a health official for a number of years to the Commission thus denying a voice to our residents as well as preventing the broader input vital to the Commission's work.

AMHRO attends Commission meetings and we see firsthand the exceptional and thoughtful efforts to provide superior home safety and resident and consumer protection. I am saying unequivocally, there is no other entity that can protect our homeowners and address their concerns better than the Ohio Manufactured Homes Commission.

The Commission should be heralded as a model which has successfully created a partnership involving the industry and residents/homeowners working together provide superior homeowner safety while protecting the affordability of manufactured homeownership.

As Governor Kasich reminds us in his book, *Two Paths*, "America is great because America is good --- and because Americans have stayed true to whom we are: one nation, under God indivisible with liberty and justice for all". Well my friends, that is true about the Manufactured Homes Commission. Our Commission is great, because they have stayed true to making our lives in manufactured housing safer and giving us a voice we never had before.

AMHRO strongly supports keeping our Ohio Manufactured Home Commission exactly where it is. I urge that the Senate reverses its decision made earlier this week to side with the Governor on this item and restore the Manufactured Homes Commission to current law. Thank you for your consideration. Please save our Commission!