

THE CALIFORNIAN

GOLDEN STATE MANUFACTURED-HOME OWNERS LEAGUE

GSMOL- Advocating for Homeowner Rights Since 1962

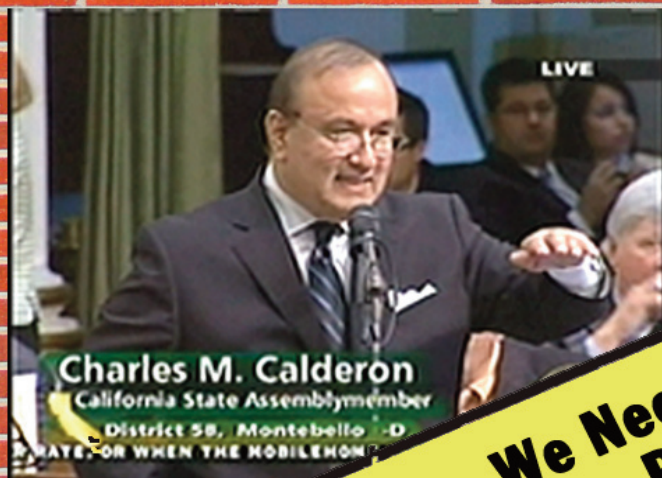
July/August 2009

AB 761 SMOKES OUT SUPPORTERS FROM NON-SUPPORTERS

"Wall of FAME"



"Wall of SHAME"



**We Need YOUR Help to
Pass AB 566
See Page 10**

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About the Cover

The "Wall of FAME" on the front cover includes video snapshots of four supportive Legislators (Nava, Feuer, Jones and Brownley) speaking in opposition to AB 761 when it was offered reconsideration on the floor of the Assembly on June 25. The "Wall of SHAME" has similar snapshots of Assemblymembers Calderon, Garrick, Logue, Nestande and Harkey who urged the Assembly to support AB 761. To view the actual video clips of comments made by these and other legislators, visit www.calchannel.com or the "mhoadvocate" section at www.youtube.com.

Do You Have Special Skills? **Do You Like to Write?** **WE NEED YOU!**

Our most important need currently is that of a volunteer Editor of the *Californian*. While our volunteer leaders who currently create the *Californian* appreciate the comments on the new format and content, having a dedicated Editor would allow those leaders to focus more on other important tasks in serving our membership. This would be a great opportunity for you to make a significant contribution in serving homeowners throughout the state. We want to thank those who have responded to previous appeals for help and continue to welcome such responses.

Contact the GSMOL home office at 1 (800) 888-1727 for details.



- Do you know someone who deserves special recognition for their service to MH owners? Nominate them for "Golden Star" recognition in the *Californian*. Contact the GSMOL home office or a GSMOL leader to make your nomination.
- To GSMOL members who have attended hearings at the State Capitol, especially those from Sonoma, Napa and Santa Cruz Counties who recently chartered buses to make the trip!
- To the City of Carson for its continued support of homeowners in sponsoring AB 566
- To the City of San Rafael for appealing the decision of Judge Vaughn Walker in the Contempo Marin case
- To Assemblymember Paul Cook, the only Republican who voted against AB 761 on June 25

President's Report



**Tim Sheahan, GSMOL
State President**

The AB 761 Rollercoaster

June and July proved to be a time of ups and downs regarding legislation. The emotional rollercoaster was most evident with AB 761 (Calderon), a bill that would allow huge rent increases when homes are sold. Early in the month, it appeared the bill might die because it did not pass out of its house of origin by June 5. It was granted a time extension and when subsequently heard on the Assembly Floor on June 22, it fell three votes short of the necessary 41 "Aye" votes to gain passage.

We were thrilled with that outcome and despite the bill being granted "reconsideration," we hoped it would not appear again this year. So, on June 25, we were a bit surprised AB 761 returned to the Assembly Floor for discussion and vote. I happened to be able to view the proceeding on cable television and to my shock and dismay; my own Assemblymember, Martin Garrick, addressed the Assembly urging their support of AB 761! Considering Mr. Garrick represents thousands of manufactured-home owners in north San Diego County, his comments lumping the rights of homeowners together with apartment tenants were particularly offensive. They expressed either a significant misunder-

standing of the issues or indifference to the best interests of his MH constituents. This is in stark contrast to the many years of dedicated service the area enjoyed when Republican William Craven served in the Legislature. Other Republicans joined Mr. Garrick in voicing support of AB 761 and several Democrats also voted for that dangerous bill. When the final votes were tallied, AB 761 had achieved 42 "Aye" votes, one more than the required number to gain passage.

We appreciate those who voted against the bill and also those who abstained, because a non-vote counts the same as a "no" vote. We want to recognize Republican Paul Cook who represents the Yucaipa area for being the lone Republican Assemblymember to cast a "no" vote on AB 761. It is our mission to break-through to the Republican Caucus in Sacramento to provide better representation of their constituents and we encourage you who are represented by Republican legislators to make it your mission to lobby them for support. Check to see how your legislator voted and follow-up with a call or a letter to their district office to voice either your appreciation or your disappointment in them. Many of them need reminders that they were elected to be "representatives" and not to push their own ideological agenda. Contacting them will make them feel some accountability for their actions and remind them you are following their votes.

Do you know who your legislators are? If not, usually there is a section in the front of yellow page telephone directories that lists elected officials.

Find the ones with an office near you and give them a call to verify you are a constituent. If you have Internet access, visit www.leginfo.ca.gov, where you can enter your zip code to find your legislator. That website also has links to every legislator's individual website. By visiting your legislator's website, you might be able to find out about open houses or public appearances, which are both opportunities to meet and discuss issues with YOUR elected official. Seize that opportunity!

Make Plans Now For The 2010 Convention

Make plans and save money now so you can attend the GSMOL Biennial State Convention to be held in Ontario, CA April 9, 10 and 11, 2010. Ontario is in southern California near Riverside. Active chapters are entitled to send delegates so this is the time to make sure your chapter is indeed active. Board positions that will be up for election include: President, Vice President Zone B, Vice President Zone C, Vice President Zone D, Vice President ROP, Treasurer and Secretary. Please consider running for office and if not already a leader in the field, we suggest you become an associate manager now to gain experience in being a GSMOL leader. As we near 50 years of service to our membership, the 2010 convention will be an important milestone for GSMOL. We hope to see you there!

BOARD MEETING 8/25

Our next state Board meeting will be held at the Home Office in Garden Grove on Tuesday August 25 starting at 10 AM. All "regular" members are welcome to attend.

Call the GSMOL office at
1 800 888-1727 for details.

Capitol Report



GSMOL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Brian Augusta, GSMOL Legislative Advocate

AB 566 Passes Committee as 100 MH Owners Cheer

AB 566 passed out of Senate Trans and Housing on a 7 to 4 on July 14. Senator Simitian, who had been elusive about his vote on the bill, was extremely instrumental in helping the bill move forward. The Senator repeatedly reminded the committee what the bill actually would do, thereby clearing the confusion that the MHP lobbyists continued to create during the long hearing. It appears AB 566 will reach the Floor of the Senate for a vote in late August.

Description: Would require that the currently-mandated survey of residents of a park slated for conversion to condominiums demonstrate that a majority of the residents support the conversion. The bill also would state that localities may enact reasonable measures to prevent sham conversions or to preserve affordable housing.

OTHER ASSEMBLY BILLS

AB 481 (Ma) - OPPOSE - Not Heard in Assembly Housing, Two-year bill that may be heard in January. Description: Would provide that a mobilehome that is not owner-occupied would not be subject to local rent controls

AB 761 (Calderon) - OPPOSE - Passed off Assembly Floor on June 25th, upon re-consideration. Reportedly still held in Senate Rules Committee and will become a two-year bill and to be taken up in January. Description: Would impose vacancy decontrol restrictions on local mobilehome rent control ordinances. Upon a sale or vacancy of a mobilehome, the space rent would be set by the park, at market rate (i.e., "vacancy decontrol"). The bill would destroy billions of dollars of homeowner equity.

AB 869 (Mendoza) - SPONSOR - Bill will be taken up in January. Description: Would create a program of certification for, and continuing education of, mobilehome park managers.

AB 1108 (Fuentes) -SUPPORT - Passed Senate Utilities Committee. Headed to Senate Appropriations. Urge your Senator to support. Description: Would make various changes to requirements when electric or gas utilities are provided to mobilehome park residents and residential tenants through a master meter, including the following: (1) would allow the Public Utilities Commission to order repairs and maintenance of system; (2) Directs that the rate differential received by park owners be directed toward maintenance and repair; and (3) Would limit late fees on utility bills.

SENATE BILLS

SB 23 (Padilla) - SUPPORT - Passed

the Senate (36-0). Passed without opposition in Assembly Housing Committee. Urge your Assemblymember to Support. Description: Would require mobilehome parks to develop, implement, and post an emergency and fire safety plan; would allow cities and counties to adopt more stringent regulations.

SB 804 (Leno) SUPPORT -Passed the Senate (28-6). Passed in the Assembly with none opposed. Will next go to the Governor. Description: Would prohibit a park from requiring a homeowner, who is replacing a mobilehome or manufactured home on a space in the park, to use a specific broker, dealer, or other person as an agent in the purchase or installation of the replacement home.

SB 111 (Correa) SUPPORT - Bill passed Assembly Housing (4-2) and is now pending on Assembly Floor. Urge your Assemblymember to Support. Description: Would reorganize the MRL to clean it up and make it more user-friendly by combining certain related sections and cleaning up other portions of the code.

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Reminders!

Postal rates are now 44 cents per letter. Please remember to use the right postage when mailing us! Thank You!

Please notify the GSMOL home office if you change your address. Returned mail is charged back to the League.

Capitol Report

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Legislative Supplement

This column generally just reports on breaking news in the capitol, but this time we add a different view---a glimpse of the "behind-the-scenes" world of legislation, what it takes to "work a bill". Questions always come up at this point in the legislative year-- What's going on? Why are bills scheduled for committee hearing, and then pulled at the last minute after we have spent hours on a bus to attend the hearing? How do terrible mobilehome bills pass off the Senate or Assembly floors? Why do legislators get to use inaccurate data and not get called on it?"

These questions demand more than a few paragraphs, but we will provide a brief overview in this edition, and spend more time on these questions in future issues.

What's Going On Now?

This is deadline time in the Legislature. However, many of the deadlines have been waived, creating utter chaos for everyone inside and outside the capitol. For example, all bills were required to be acted on by their policy committee by 7/10. But 7/10 has passed and many bills are still being heard, like AB 566, the mobilehome park conversion protection bill that is high on GSMOL's priority list for passage.

What's up with the deadlines? All deadlines except constitutional deadlines can be waived. We all know that the California's state budget is \$26 billion out of balance and the state is now issuing IOUs. Why? The state cannot pay its bills. The economy continues to plunge, voters rejected \$6 billion in funds on the May ballot; demand for

services, like unemployment, has spiked because of job losses--the reasons are endless. The Governor and Republican and Democrat legislators cannot agree on a solution to the \$26 billion gap. So they stopped hearing most bills (like AB 566) in order to concentrate on the budget. The legislators then extended most of the deadlines, resulting in great confusion about when and even, if, bills would be heard.

Let's use AB 566 again as an example. AB 566 was scheduled for its second hearing Senate Transportation and Housing on 7/7. The GSMOL legislative team had "worked the bill", drafted new position papers on questions we were getting on our lobby visits, met with the members of the committee and staff in the week preceding 7/7. Finally, we had a vote count, knew exactly who our "aye" votes were, and we had none to spare to get it passed. But just a few hours before the hearing, (buses of mobilehome owners were already on their way to the capitol,) we learned that one of our "aye" votes was ill and would not be present in the committee. We asked another Senator on the committee to give us a "courtesy aye vote" a common request when a member is absent, but we were refused. So we had no choice but to pull the bill. Many

Why Are Bills Pulled at the Last Moment?

bills are pulled right before or during a hearing because of a sudden vote change, a fight between the bill's author and a committee member, an absence, last minute amendments, new opponents, anything that could impact the outcome of the hearing that day and doom your bill.

Next edition: How do terrible mobilehome bills pass the Assembly or Senate? Why can legislators use false data? When does my call or letter count? And other questions about the legislative process.

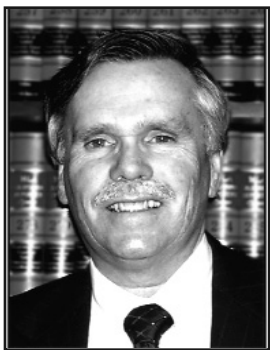
GSMOL Legislative Committee "Legislative Action Team (LAT)" The 2009 Legislative Session at a Glance

*An Activity Report by Jim Burr,
Legislative Chair*

The 2009 Legislative Session got off to a slow start and then rapidly increased in activity during the last three months as we now reach the half-way point in the session. Our priority bills were heard in several policy committees and adding additional urgency is the park owner's bill, AB 761 (Calderon). If adopted into law, the bill would abolish vacancy control!

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ENFORCING MRL VIOLATIONS... ITS UP TO YOU!



**By: Bruce Stanton,
Attorney**

As I travel throughout California meeting with mobilehome residents, the issue of "enforcement of the laws" is almost always discussed. Homeowners want to know how they can ensure that a park owner follows the law. They want to know what can be done if the Mobilehome Residency Law (MRL) is violated, or if they are suffering from unfair treatment not found in any specific law. Usually, they will ask me something like: "Who is going to protect me?" or "Who will enforce the laws for me?" Expecting an easy answer that gets them off the hook, they may not always like my response. But it is important that I communicate reality to them. And so my answer usually ends with the sentence: "It's up to YOU!"

For the last 30 years, many laws have been passed at the state and local level which protect mobilehome residents. Mobilehome resident organizations annually wage battles in Sacramento to pass new laws that are needed and to fight against laws that would damage the interests of residents. Passing laws is an important first step towards righting an injustice.

But once the law is passed, who enforces it? If a park owner violates a law, who typically is responsible for seeing to it that justice is done? And who needs to be watching carefully to see that laws are followed? The answer to each question is the same: It's YOU! The plain truth is that laws do not enforce themselves. The most detailed and perfect statute can be drafted and passed through the legislature and signed into law. But until someone stands up to demand its enforcement, it is only a deterrent. Sometimes just having a deterrent in place is enough to discourage violation of the law. But often the person who the law is designed to protect is who must stand up, "blow the whistle" and simply say: "Enough is Enough!" Only when a resident decides to take a stand and do something about it will justice truly be accomplished in most cases.

There are some laws which can be enforced by government authorities. Most local rent ordinances, for example, state that a park owner who violates the law could be guilty of a misdemeanor. If a resident believes that a violation is occurring, he or she should contact the local City Manager or City Attorney to determine if the local government can or will enforce the law. This is always preferable, since the public officials whose salary we are paying can do the work, and the resident can be spared the cost of hiring his or her own attorney. But most laws do not work this way. Few violations of the MRL, other than certain nuisance actions, will be enforced by local or state governments. MRL vio-

lations are civil disputes which need to be handled by the civil courts. Many times this requires the representation of an attorney, or intervention by a mediation service. In these cases, the burden of enforcement is clearly on the residents.

So what does enforcement look like? What does the resident have to do? The following are some simple steps to enforcing your legal rights.

1. KNOW YOUR RIGHTS.

There is no substitute for this. Every mobilehome resident should have a copy of the MRL, which is distributed by most park owners annually. You can go on line to download a copy of the complete MRL for free at: www.sen.ca.gov/mobilehome. You can write to the Senate Publications Office in Sacramento to purchase a copy for \$5.25. Or, any resident should be able to go to the park office and request a copy. The MRL requires a park owner to distribute a copy to all residents each year where a "significant change" of the MRL provisions is made by the legislature. Also find out whether your local city or County has ordinances relating to rent control, park conversion or condominium conversion. Read these laws and try to understand them. Ask questions of your neighbors or the organizations of which you are a part if you need an explanation. You can't know if your rights are being violated until you first know what your rights are!

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ENFORCING MRL VIOLATIONS... ITS UP TO YOU!

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2. BE VIGILANT. Once you know the laws, you need to watch carefully to ensure that no violations are occurring. This requires one to pay attention. Read the notices that you receive. Review your rent notices carefully. If something seems like it isn't right, the chances are it may not be. It may be necessary to watch out for your friends and neighbors living in the park who don't know how to be vigilant, or cannot understand their rights due to age, infirmity or language barriers.

3. ORGANIZE AND UNITE. A common reaction from residents faced with a violation of their rights is to shrink from the task because they are afraid of how the park owner might retaliate against them. Left alone to fend for themselves, they often feel inadequate, intimidated and afraid of the consequences. And they might be unable to afford an attorney or the costs of enforcing their rights on their own. But if they unite with others, the possibilities might be endless. If 20 residents unite, each one has the power and finances of 20. If 100 residents unite, they combine awesome financial power and influence. This can occur in various ways. Join GSMOL to become educated and help support state-wide causes, such as the defeat of Proposition 98 last year. Join your local park association. And band together when necessary to fight unfair rules, unauthorized rent increases or pass throughs, or to oppose park conversions. In each case, residents send a powerful message to park owners that they speak with one voice, and

cannot be individually intimidated into silence.

4. DO NOT BE INTIMIDATED. Fear of retaliation discourages many residents from standing up for their rights. No one can guarantee that a resident will not receive harassment or intimidation. Notices to pull weeds or paint the mailbox might come more regularly. The park might be watching for each and every violation of the rules, no matter how small. This kind of conduct comes with the territory in many cases, and residents should be on their guard. But it should be remembered that the park can NEVER evict anyone without just cause. No one should abandon their rights due to threats or intimidation which has no basis. Such conduct by management could result in violations of the MRL that would entitle the resident to recover civil penalties for "willful violations". If the park owner thinks that a resident can be easily intimidated, they are more inclined to try and do so. But if a resident makes it clear that he or she will not back down from the enforcement of their rights, no matter what it takes, the harassment may stop. And a resolution to the problem becomes far more likely.

5. GET QUALIFIED HELP. If the resident determines that the City Attorney or local government will not be involved, and the resident or group of residents cannot handle the matter on their own, professional help should immediately be sought. Look for an attorney in your area who has expertise in mobilehome law. Ask for referrals. Get proper advice about the available options. If litigation is required, hiring

an attorney is a must. Small claims court is an option for damages up to \$7,500.00, but often the small claims Judge is not prepared or qualified to rule on MRL issues, and cannot issue an injunction. And if file a small claims court action and lose, you cannot appeal. It is usually better to file in Superior Court.

6. STAY COMMITTED. Often the enforcement of rights takes time. This requires the residents to stay engaged for the long haul. The park owner's strategy might be to wear down the will and incentive of the residents. Don't let that occur! Once you start the process, keep at it. Invest your time, your talents and, where necessary, your money. After all, you are protecting your home, and your way of life. Otherwise, all that you have previously put into the process could be lost.

7. SUPPORT THE PASSAGE OF STATE AND LOCAL LAWS. It is critical that each mobilehome resident join the effort to pass good laws and defeat bad ones. Stay tuned to GSMOL to find out what is happening both in Sacramento and your own town. You need to be well informed about how to help pass needed legislation. And once those laws pass, read them so that you will know your rights (this takes us back to Step 1).

Any resident can accomplish all of these if they are willing. If each does his or her part, mobilehome owners can be a mighty force to be reckoned with. Remember, it all starts with YOU. YOU have the power. But YOU must be willing to use it!

GSMOL Legislative Committee "Legislative Action Team (LAT)" The 2009 Legislative Session at a Glance

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It was heard twice in Assembly Housing and on the Assm. Floor and as of this writing is pending in the Senate Rules committee. It is running out of time and could become a 2-year bill; however the author has not stated this as of this writing.

Through the regular session, LAT Members have been hard at work as follows:

Filling the hearing rooms – has ranged between 25 to 65 MH owners and our Affordable Housing Coalition supporters (i.e. AARP, CARA, etc.). It involves organizing orientation sessions with our professional team in the Capitol before and debriefings after the hearings.

On two occasions we brought Bruce Stanton to the Capitol to testify against AB 761 with Christine & Brian.

Manage the grassroots lobbying effort, under the direction of our Leg. Advocates. This involves timely e-mail distributions ("E-Blasts") to encourage calls, letters and faxes for committee hearings and floor votes, and of course filling the hearing rooms.

Responding to a substantial increase in questions from volunteers, many of them participating this year for the first time. The e-mail and phone call response has at times been overwhelming.

New Strategies for the 2009 Legislative Session

Several new strategies were created this year as encouraged by our new Legislative Team, Brian Augusta, Advocate and Christine Minnehan, Advisor as follows:

New in this session is Brian Augusta's concept of targeted "yellow card quick response". Brian drafts the message and legislator's address on the card, e-mails it to a FedEx Kinko's in a city of our choosing where they are printed, picked up by volunteers and delivered to leaders in 2 or 3 parks for distribution to each home. So far Lanier Harper (Reg. 3), Mary Woods (Reg. 5), Merle Pittman (Reg. 8) and Tim Sheahan (Reg. 7) have participated. It involves 250 to 500 cards. This effort is in addition to the traditional small yellow postcards we still encourage members to obtain from the GSMOL home office for mailing to legislators and the Governor.

Also new this session – more chartered busses, reserving a section of the Capitol cafeteria and providing a continental breakfast or light lunch for up to 45 folks – primarily to accommodate the additional chartered buses from Sonoma County (Roger McConnell), Santa Cruz County (Rich Halterman) and soon from Calistoga (Catherine Singels). We want to encourage their participation by making them as comfortable as possible after a 2 to 3 hour bus trip and this was well received. This is funded by the GSMOL PAC.

Another feature is the new look for our Legislative Updates sent by e-mail ("e-blasts"). This features a web-based format for that includes a more attractive user-friendly format with instant links that will provide information options than in the past. This can be easily forwarded through our corresponding member's e-blast network that reaches over 4,000 members of the LAT network including our MH Coalition Partners like CMRAA, CoMO-CAL, MOHAC and TOMOHAC, SCMOA, SRMOA, Neighborhood Friends and more.

The MH Advocacy Summit Meeting is new, as well. Encouraged by Christine Minnehan, the LAT helped facilitate the meetings as led by Christine, Brian and GSMOL Corporate Council Bruce Stanton, with Tim Sheahan in an active role and participation from John Tennyson. Three meetings were held - two in Sacramento moderated by Christine and Brian and one in Chatsworth led by Bruce. Each Summit involved several regional MH advocacy associations that seem to have succeeded in solidifying the mobile home constituency to "speak with one voice" when lobbying our state legislators.

GSMOL / CoMO-CAL Consensus Meetings, these preceded each Summit in which we attempted to reach agreement on legislation advocacy and improving cooperation. A code of conduct, joint announcements, and a Steering Committee were discussed and are in various stages of development. The Summit and joint association meetings required a substantial time commitment from our leadership and additional expense for professional advisors.

Another administrative activity is zeroing in on GSMOL members in Assembly Districts where we have no current Corresponding Members (CMs). These new volunteer lobbyists spearhead our efforts in the many Districts where we have no CMs. Due to some long hours and hard work by LAT Secretary Mary Hahn, she manually cross-referenced the GSMOL membership list to the Assm. Districts then identified members and their contact information. At a recent monthly meeting, we split these districts among the members to call and encourage their participation. We feel this will be a large step in completing the project that has frustrated us for some time.

AB 761 RECAP

Assembly Votes on AB 761

AYES

Anderson	B. Berryhill	T. Berryhill
Blakeslee	Charles Calderon	Conway
Davis	De Leon DeVore	Duvall
Emmerson	Eng	Fletcher
Fuller	G. Galgiani	Garrick
Gilmore	Hagman	Hall
Harkey	Hernandez	Hill
Jeffries	Knight	Logue
Ma	Mendoza	Miller
Nestande	Niello	Nielsen
J.A. Perez	Portantino	Salas
S. Smyth	Solorio	A. Strickland
Tran	Villines	Bass

NOES

Ammiano	Arambula	Beall
Blumenfield	Brownley	Caballero
Chesbro Cook	Coto	Evans
Feuer	Fuentes	Furutani
Hayashi	Huber	Huffman
Jones	B. Lowenthal	M.Nava
Ruskin	Saldana	Skinner
Swanson	Torres	Torrico
Yamada		

ABSENT, ABSTAINING, OR NOT VOTING

Adams	Block	Buchanan	Carter
De La Torre	Fong	Krekorian	Lieu
V. M. Perez	Torlakson		
[Vacant seat]			

Although AB 761 has not been officially killed in the Legislature as of press time, it now appears dead for this year but will likely be taken up again in January. We initially thought the bill was killed on the Floor of the Assembly on June 22 when it failed to achieve the necessary 41 votes to gain passage. Remarkably, it was granted reconsideration and ultimately received 42 votes when a subsequent Assembly vote was taken on June 25. It became stalled in the Senate Rules Committee but

was set to go to the Senate Judiciary Committee, where we hoped to stop it.

As we have reported previously, AB 761 is a very dangerous bill that would allow huge rent increases when homes are sold in rental communities. The bill targeted rent control areas but we have no doubt that if passed, it would lead to park landowners in non rent control areas modifying rental agreements to provide for similar large rent increase. The large rent increases would rob homeowner equity, make it very hard to sell and deny thousands of low-income from qualifying for residency. Below are the votes on AB 761. Since at least 41 "Aye" votes are required for passage, "absent" or "abstaining" votes count the same as a "No" vote.

THEME FOR 2010 GSMOL STATE CONVENTION

A theme/slogan is needed for the 2010 Convention to be held in Ontario, California at the Marriott Hotel, April 9, 10, 11. If you are a frustrated poet, now is your chance to shine. All members are encouraged to submit a theme. It should be short, sweet, encouraging, reflect the ideals of a convention, a one-liner, with a lot of pizzazz and grab the interest of the member.

You can top that! Now is the time for you to let us know what you think would make a good Theme. Each submission will be seriously considered by the Convention Committee. Please send your theme submission entry to one of the following: Diana Johnson,

3015 Bayshore Rd, #6, Redwood City, CA 94093, email address: gsmol-reg1@yahoo.com; Mary Hahn, PO Box 19126, Sacramento, CA 95819, email address: MaryH2811@aol.com; Garden Grove Office, 11021 Magnolia Ave, Garden Grove, CA 92881, email address: gsmol@earthlink.net.

LAST CHANCE - PROPOSED BY LAW REVISIONS FOR 2010 GSMOL STATE CONVENTION DEADLINE - AUGUST 15, 2009

August 15, 2009 is the cut-off date for submission of any changes to GSMOL By Laws. Proposed changes must be submitted to the By Laws Committee for action. The committee will review your submission; discuss it and forward recommendations to the Board of Directors for their action.

The By-Laws Committee is anxiously waiting for any changes you propose. They know you have been involved in other activities supporting GSMOL, and don't want you to miss this opportunity, especially if you have some proposed changes you have been thinking about for a long time. Send them to: Diana Johnson, 315 Bayshore Rd, #6, Redwood City, CA 94063, or Mary Hahn, PO Box 19126, Sacramento, CA 95819, or to GSMOL Office, 11021 Magnolia Ave, Garden Grove, CA 92811. Email Addresses: Diana, gsmolreg1@yahoo.com; Mary, MaryH2811@aol.com, and Garden Grove Office, gsmol@earthlink.net.

AB 566 Headed to the Senate Floor



Homeowners await the start of the hearing on AB 566 at the Capitol

GSMOL Legislative Action Team Chairman Jim Burr sparks a cheer from a crowded Capitol cafeteria following successful passage of AB 566 in the Senate Transportation and Housing Committee. GSMOL Political Action Committee (PAC) fund money was used to reserve the room and provide a light lunch for attendees.

This group of homeowners from the Santa Cruz area was just one of several groups who travelled to the Capitol to attend the hearing on AB 566. We should all be grateful for their sacrifice of time and effort to attend the hearings!

As mentioned in the Capitol Report, AB 566 (Nava) passed the Senate Transportation and Housing Committee and is now set to go to the full Senate for vote. It is very important that you contact your State Senator to urge support of AB 566. This has been a hard-fought battle in the Legislature for several years and we all need to do everything possible to lobby our Senators to support this important legislation.

If successful in the Senate, we will then focus on the Governor. Assemblymember Pedro Nava and the City of Carson should be commended for their steadfast support of homeowners in authoring/sponsoring AB 566, which will help homeowners statewide. GSMOL has spent countless hours in support of AB 566 and remains hopeful that this time we will be successful. We are grateful to the dozens of homeowners from several areas of northern California who attended the recent hearings in Sacramento.

A big crowd does leave an impression with Committee members. For those who can't attend the hearings in person, we hope you or your GSMOL Chapter or homeowner association will consider making a contribution to the GSMOL PAC fund to allow us to continue to coordinate trips to the Capitol.

Passage of AB 566 will help protect homeowner rights to ensure condo conversions are done the right way and not unilaterally forced upon captive homeowners. We are now

seeing conversion attempts in areas without rent stabilization ordinances as a way to unload communities with infrastructure deficiencies.

That means any residents of rental communities are vulnerable to this strategy by park landowners and why we all should be concerned. Condo conversions to resident ownership can be a good thing with homeowner support and support of local government; but without such support, homeowners are often victimized.

Reminder to Members and Leaders

We encourage you to exercise restraint and caution when making verbal and written comments about others. Keep your emotions in check and conduct yourself in a businesslike way for the best opportunity to be successful in dealing with management or your neighbors!

Accomplishment in San Luis Obispo County



SLOMAP Leadership

Front row: from left to right

Shirley Shiffer, Betty Lightfoot, Marie Pounders, Al Strunk, Susan Martinez, Barbara Sturtevant

Back row: from left to right

Jim Erickson, Jim McCallum, Bob Murphy, Bud Lang, Carole Henson, Marge Pohl, Joan Harper

SLOMAP, the San Luis Obispo Mobilehome Residents' Assistance Panel, a new county-wide group, won the Best Senior Citizen Program of the Year Award on May 21, 2009 at the Area Agency on Aging's Annual Awards Luncheon. Marie Pounders, a member of the SLO County Commission on Aging, accepted the Award as President of SLOMAP and Co-Manager of GSMOL's Region 8. Marie, who is the GSMOL President at Sea Oaks Mobilehome Park in Los Osos, joined the Commission on Aging in 2008 representing Affordable Housing. Mobilehome parks represent the largest source of affordable housing in California today. GSMOL worked

closely with the County for three years helping to develop the Mobilehome Park Conversion Ordinance. It was during this time period that the need became evident for a resource agency or group which could serve as an information and referral service for park residents.

In July, 2008, SLOMAP held its first meeting. The panel is comprised of experienced HOA and GSMOL volunteers from all five geographical areas of the county and the cities of San Luis Obispo, Morro Bay, Grover Beach and Atascadero. There are seventy-two mobilehome parks and approximately 5,000 spaces within the county borders. Panel members have received

special training in Mobilehome Residency Law (MRL), local Rent Control Ordinance(s) and Title 25. SLOMAP is sponsored by GSMOL, but residents do not have to be members of a specific mobilehome owners' group to ask for help or information. Through the Commission's upcoming Speaker's Bureau, SLOMAP will be able to offer connections with a wide variety of social service and community informational programs. Issues which are important for one park are frequently important for residents in other parks; SLOMAP will provide the means to open the lines of communication. Encouraging jurisdictions to work together and communicate with each other will help support residents' legal rights under the Mobilehome Residency Law.

Al Strunk and Marge Pohl of Sea Oaks are Co-Vice Presidents of SLOMAP; Joan Harper, GSMOL, from Laguna Lake in SLO is the Secretary, Linda Cannon, HOA-GSMOL, from Rancho San Luis in SLO, and Bob Murphy, HOA-GSMOL, from Casa del Rey in Oceano are Board members. Additional panel members are: Jim Erickson, GSMOL, Grover Beach; Bud Lang, GSMOL, Oceano; Carole Henson, HOA-GSMOL and Barbara Sturtevant, GSMOL, Arroyo Grande; Letty Cotta, HOA-GSMOL, SLO; Willow Walking Turtle, GSMOL, SLO; Susan Martinez and Cindi Grove, GSMOL, Los Osos; Shirley Shiffer, HOA-GSMOL, Atascadero and Betty Lightfoot HOA, Atascadero; special consultants: Jim McCallum, HOA Mayor, GSMOL, Los Osos; and Ray McKelligot, HOA-GSMOL, Morro Bay.

WE NEED ALL MOBILEHOME RESIDENTS TO REGISTER TO VOTE FOR FUTURE ELECTIONS

We need all residents registered to vote. Just as in prior elections where we voted on Prop 199, voted down Prop 98 and voted for Prop 99, we still need residents registered for upcoming elections - so we can vote on our issues as they come up on the ballot from park owners.

Once the park owners bills are defeated in the legislature they will likely try again to put initiatives on the ballot to try to get rid of "rent control", and to get more mobile parks "condo-ized".

To stop the park owners from wrecking our mobilehome lifestyle - we must all "get out the vote" to preserve our way of life. We need people to register voters at festivals, fairs, and other gatherings. There are classes on voter registration at the Registrar of Voter's Office. Contact your local office for more information on this. You may call 510-522-7246 or e-mail us at: rhofmann2001@yahoo.com.

CONTINUE TO BE A GSMOL "SOLID CITIZEN" AND BE REGISTERED TO VOTE!!!

**More mobile
home parks trying
to become condos**

Carolyn Said, Chronicle Staff Writer
San Francisco Chronicle
Tuesday, July 21, 2009

Mobile home parks, still affordable to many people, have become the latest housing battlefield. A growing number of park operators want to convert the spaces those mobile homes occupy to condominium ownership - a move that some residents say would price them out of their homes.

A bill being debated in the Legislature would give local governments and park residents more say in such conversions. It would allow municipalities to give more weight to surveys of community residents in deciding whether to approve condo conversions.

"We're trying to make sure that people whose lives are going to be affected have a voice," said Assemblyman Pedro Nava, D-Santa Barbara, the bill's sponsor. "Mobile home parks are affordable housing. The notion that you could have the land sold out from under you is just abhorrent."

The bill passed the Assembly in May on a 41-31 vote and is eligible for a vote on the Senate floor Aug. 17.

Traditionally, mobile home park owners rent out lots and maintain common areas such as roads, clubhouses or pools. Residents own their dwellings but pay rent for the lots where they sit. When a park converts to condo-style ownership, which requires approval to subdivide from the municipality, the so-called air space the mobile homes occupy is offered for sale, often for prices of \$100,000 to \$200,000, eliminating rent.

Critics say park owners are exploiting a loophole in state law that lets them

cash in big-time, circumvent local rent control and gentrify affordable housing. Some can't afford it. But park owners say this is a property rights issue, that going the condo route is the best way to capitalize on their investments, and that it benefits residents who can afford to buy or can obtain publicly assisted loans to buy.

Santa Rosa's Country Mobile Home Park is one whose owner has applied for condo conversion, a move opposed by a majority of its residents. Among them are Phil Dion, 70, and his wife, Mickie, 67.

"If it went condo, my wife and I would ... have to abandon our unit and leave," Dion said. "We'd have no place to go." The couple paid \$50,000 for their two-bedroom manufactured house about seven years ago. The monthly rent for their space is \$515. "We couldn't afford to move our home, and we couldn't afford to buy the lot underneath," he said. "I contacted 13 finance companies, and only one would finance the lot purchase - at 18 percent interest." The park's owner, Country Mobile Investments of Walnut Creek, could not be reached for comment.

Low-income residents who don't want to buy have lifetime rent-control protection. But as soon as one unit in the park sells, all the moderate-income and above residents get switched from local rent control - which ties annual increases to inflation - to state rent control, which allows rents to increase to market rate over four years.

Continued on page 13

More mobile home parks trying to become condos

Continue from page 12

In recent years, many cities and counties have barred mobile home parks from going condo, saying they want to preserve affordable housing.

In response, park owners have filed more than 15 lawsuits against the municipalities. The only one that made it through the appellate process was decided for the park owner, said Richard Close, a Santa Monica attorney who represents owners in many of the lawsuits.

Moving them unlikely

Residents prefer to call them "manufactured homes" and say moving their dwellings is prohibitively expensive.

"In the old days, if you didn't like a park, you unhooked and drove to another location," said Sam DiGiacomo, who lives in a mobile-home park in the

town of Sonoma and runs the local chapter of the Golden State Manufactured-Home Owners League, which represents residents. "But now they're not really mobile; my home sits on a cement foundation, the wheels are removed."

"People think we're nomads that travel from place to place," said Suzanne Angeo, a resident of Santa Rosa's Country Mobile Home Park. "But we live here; these are our homes. Many of us have invested our

life savings into them."

Many residents worry that going condo will wipe out that investment.

Potential buyers will heavily discount the value of the homes if they have to pay a big premium for the lots, said Will Constantine, a Santa Cruz attorney who represents park residents fighting condo conversion.

"When a park owner converts, the mobile-home owners lose about 95 percent of their homes' value," he said. "If a resident wants to sell, the person buying has to buy the lot. If you have to pay \$200,000 for a lot, you won't have much left over to buy the mobile home."

For residents who are counting their pennies, that's a big worry.

"For many of us, this is our last home;

we'll go from here to the grave or a nursing home," said Jean Warnes, 74, who chairs the homeowners association at Sequoia Gardens, a Santa Rosa mobile home park that has applied to go condo. It has the same owner as the Country park. "When we pass away, our heirs cannot inherit our homes if they must buy the air-dirt underneath. If we go to a nursing home, we will have nothing for our keep."

But not all residents agree. "As many years as we've paid rent, we could have bought this lot over and over," said Joan Allen, who has lived in Santa Rosa's Country for 29 years. "I feel it would be more advantageous to buy the lot. If we had the opportunity and the price was right, it would be a good investment."

2008 SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION & HOUSING

Vote on AB 566 July 14, 2009

Senator	State Phone	Fax	AB 566 Vote
<u>Senator Alan Lowenthal (Chair) (D)</u>	(916) 651-4027	(916) 327-9113	YES
<u>Senator Robert Huff (Vice-Chair) (R)</u>	(916) 651-4029	(916) 324-0922	NO
<u>Senator Roy Ashburn (R)</u>	(916) 651-4018	(916) 322-3304	NO
<u>Senator Mark DeSaulnier (D)</u>	(916) 651-4007	(916) 445-2527	YES
<u>Senator Tom Harman (R)</u>	(916) 651-4035	(916) 445-9236	NO
<u>Senator Dennis Hollingsworth (R)</u>	(916) 651-4036	(916) 447-9008	NO
<u>Senator Christine Kehoe (D)</u>	(916) 651-4039	(916) 327-2188	YES
<u>Senator Jenny Oropeza (D)</u>	(916) 65104028	(916) 323-6056	YES
<u>Senator Fran Pavley (D)</u>	(916) 651-4023	(916) 324-4823	YES
<u>Senator Joe Simitian (D)</u>	(916) 651-4011	(916) 323-4529	YES
<u>Senator Lois Wolk (D)</u>	(916) 651-4005	(916) 323-2304	YES

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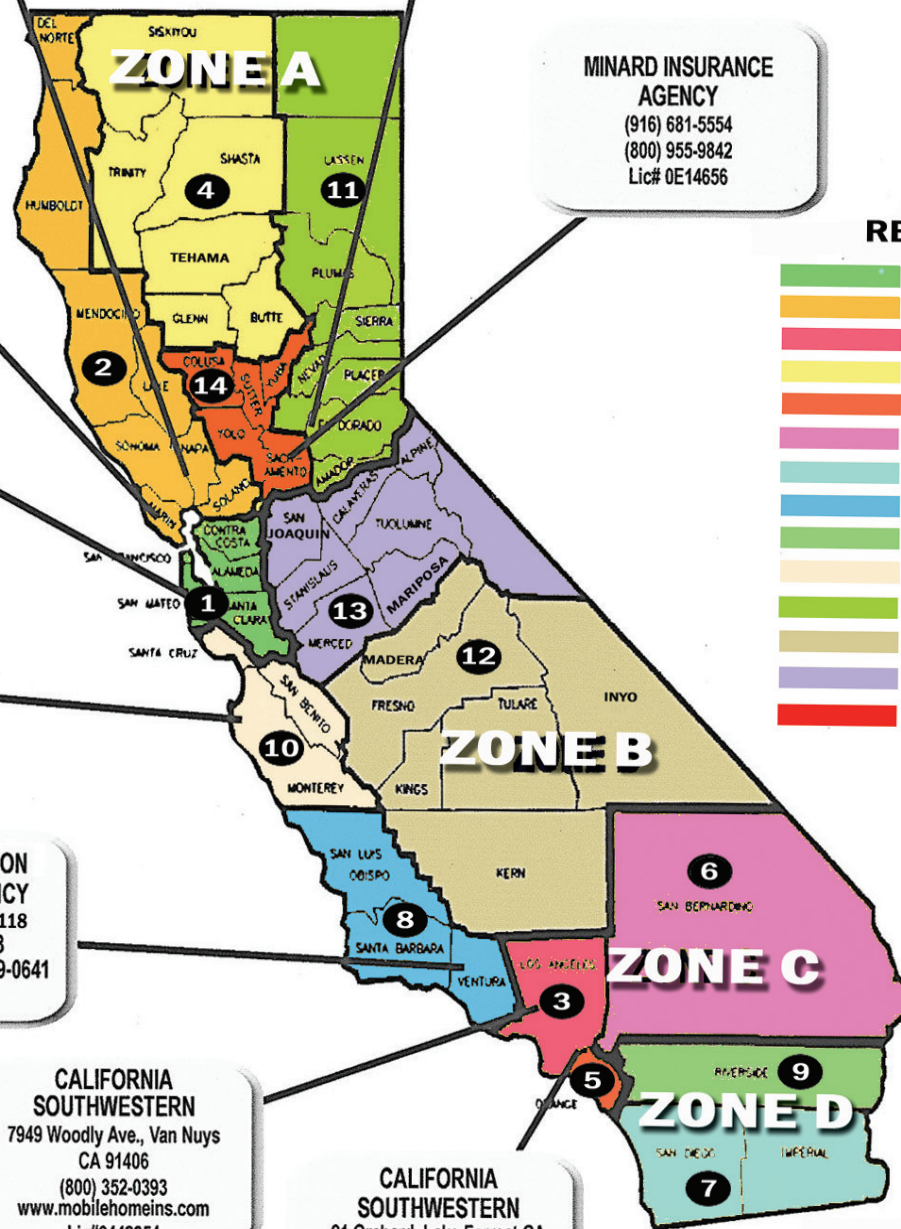
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Top Ten Reasons to Belong to GSMOL!

- 10) A long history of successfully fighting for homeowner rights since 1962
- 9) Paid professional advocates and active Legislative Committee working at the Capitol to get protective laws passed and prevent laws that would hurt homeowners. In 2008 alone, GSMOL spent over \$100,000 advocating for YOUR rights! That money comes from membership dues and contributions
- 8) Responsible for most of the CA Mobilehome Residency Law (MRL) and other accomplishments that continue to benefit manufactured-home owners throughout CA
- 7) Statewide network of chapters and volunteer leaders assisting members at the local level
- 6) GSMOL is the widely-recognized representative of California manufactured-home owners at national, state, and local levels
- 5) Californian newsletter, website (www.gsmol.org) and other valuable resources
- 4) Legal and PAC Funds for greater homeowner protection
- 3) Helped defeat Prop. 98 (2008) and other statewide propositions that would have abolished rent control and other crucial homeowner protections
- 2) GSMOL advocacy has helped keep rents lower and home values higher
- 1) Membership serves as valuable "insurance" to protect YOUR Rights, peace of mind and quality of life.

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