

**COMMENTS CONCERNING RAISED BILL NO. 7288
AN ACT CONCERNING THE LICENSING OF COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
MANAGERS AND THE RIGHTS OF UNIT OWNERS IN CODOMINIUMS AND
OTHER COMMON INTEREST COMMUNITIES**

**By Erica Edwrads
Member – Legislative Action Committee
Community Associations Institute – Connecticut Chapter**

Summary

This bill makes many amendments to the Common Interest Ownership Act. In particular, the changes call for the licensure of community association managers. It also calls for the creation of a separate commission: Connecticut Community Association Commission.

Erica Edwards

I am currently a member of the Community Associations Institute – Connecticut Chapter’s Legislative Action Committee. The Community Associations Institute (CAI) is a national organization supporting the educational needs of the 286,000 (and growing) association boards and their community association managers. CAI-CT is the educational and technical assistance entity for community associations and their service providers in Connecticut. As financial services professional, I have experience working with hundreds of community associations throughout the country.

I am submitting my comments to present our insights into how the proposed bill will affect the Common Interest Ownership Act, the thousands of common interest communities in Connecticut, and the hundreds of thousands of people who live in them.

CAI-CT Position

CAI-CT generally supports H.B. 7288, with several suggestions for minor changes.

CAI-CT had the opportunity to meet with Rep. Lawlor and staff from Legislative Bill Drafting in late January. At this time, we discussed many of the provisions that were carefully crafted in the bill you have before you. We were in agreement that Community Association Manager licensure was appropriate and the creation of a *separate* commission focused on the issues pertaining to the common interest communities in Connecticut.

As an industry, we believe that bar is raised for all when we require that those responsible for managing the protecting the most important investment of one’s life – their home – be educated. As an organization, it is our main mission to provide resources

and education for our members. However, it has become apparent to us that without a requirement for licensure, the majority of managers in our state have not actively sought opportunities to advance their professional training in the area of community association management. This bill will ensure that they do.

There is one modification we wish to make, however.

Under Sec. 3 (b) and 3 (c) the bill mentions a National Testing Service. We wish to suggest that the bill refer to the program that is already in place and change the language to state a "national community association testing or certification program."

Generally, we endorse the concept of a Connecticut Community Association Commission. We believe this would provide an opportunity for associations and their unit owners to have an impartial sounding board to assist in handling major issues that arise in associations. However, we also firmly believe that a component of such a program must include a provision for educating unit owners. Over the past 31 years of CAI-CT's existence, we have observed that the genesis of many association conflicts are due to the lack of understanding by the unit owners that they are governed by their neighbors. Perhaps as a matter of policy, the commission may require that all complainants are required to read their association documents and attend educational sessions.

Summary

We applaud the efforts of the Judiciary Committee in developing this proposed bill. We look forward to the opportunity to continue to work together.