

Testimony of Louise Brinton
In FAVOR of HB5511
March 29, 2012

I would like to see a uniformed, statewide set of rules that become law for condo associations to follow.

Condo associations are run by volunteers and admittedly a difficult, thankless job.

It can be much like a dysfunctional family, where everyone in the family is afraid to upset the parents for fear of punishment.

I am a nurse and have my own personal beliefs, work ethic and family values, but I have to leave behind personal beliefs when I start my workday and follow my company's rules for how to do my work. My job is to take care of clients according to rules set forth by my workplace.

The role of a condo association is to listen to the unit owners and produce results within budgets and limitations at hand. Without rules and guidelines at a state level an association can run roughshod over the unit owners because of their own personal belief systems about money and how it should be spent

My particular high rise complex in Wethersfield has a president who owns approximately 15 units, does not live there and is now buying units under his long time lady friend's name. He wants to keep condo fees down because 15 times any amount of increase is a lot of money. One board member lives in Florida 6 months a year, a third board member rents her unit out and doesn't live here. There are too many conflicts of interest that have to be addressed. As I prepare for living on a fixed income I don't want higher condo fees either as the money simply isn't there once I'm not collecting a paycheck. There has to be a balance on how the money is spent to ensure a healthy reserve as well as maintaining the property.

It is run like an apartment complex owned by the president and unit owners concerns for maintenance of infrastructure, painting and landscaping are met with anger and indifference. We are told that elevator repairs, plumbing repairs, painting and landscaping are expensive, yet there is no plan or specific amounts of money in place to address how, when and where these projects will be done. A structural analysis has not been done since this large (141/142 units) complex was converted from apartments to condos in 1985.

We have \$750,000 dollars in reserve with no plan on projects to be done. I have spoken to several other associations who are envious of the amount of reserve we have as most have several hundred thousand dollars, who ask "so what aren't you fixing?" and their complexes run and look far better than ours.

A drive by our complex would tell you all. Words would not be needed.

I chose to buy here 2 years ago so I could be near services needed such as medical care, food services and access to transportation so I can remain independent. I chose to live inexpensively and that doesn't mean sub standardly.

My condo fees are not being used properly. Our president is running it as the landlord of all of us instead of the owners that we are.

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