

**TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY BILL No. 6513 - AN ACT
CONCERNING THE BUDGET AND SPECIAL ASSESSMENT APPROVAL PROCESS IN
COMMON INTEREST COMMUNITIES**

MARCH 25, 2013

Good morning Senator Coleman, Representative Fox, Senator Doyle, Representative Ritter, Senator Kissel, Representative Rebimbas and members of the Judiciary Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of Woodfield Village Unit Owners Assoc. of Fairfield.

My name is Laura OBrien and I am the President of Woodfield Village Unit Owners Assoc. in Fairfield, with more than 15 years of experience on our condominium board. I have some very serious concerns about bills that are up for consideration in the legislature this year that could have a significant effect on condominium associations, detailed below:

I strongly oppose this bill which allows a minority of 1/3 of unit owners to reject an approved budget in a situation where many of the unit owners have not voted at all. Current law requires a majority. In my experience many unit owners do not vote on proposed budgets. There can be many reasons: they aren't informed, they trust the elected board to make the right decisions, they are unable to make the meeting, they forget to send in their proxy, etc. People opposed to a budget will rally support for their views and can sometime get enough people on their side to constitute 1/3 of the population. If this proposed bill passes this small group could impose their will even though it is not what the majority of the community wishes. In my opinion this can be very dangerous for communities as these small groups could delay or prevent required maintenance which could allow the property to degrade. We have had an experience in our community where a small group was almost successful in this regard. In our case, and I assume many others, those opposed to the budget did not fully understand the financials and the responsibility to maintain the community and preserve its resale value. They are mainly driven by the desire to keep common fees low and do not understand the long term impact of letting things deteriorate. Please oppose any bill which changes the current law requiring 50% of unit owners to reject a budget.

I should mention that elected condominium board members, like myself, are unpaid volunteers who are subject to the same common fees and assessments as all other owners. We have no "special interest" other than to insure that our homes maintain their value through appropriate maintenance of the entire community.

Laura OBrien
178 Glengarry Rd
Fairfield CT 06825

obrien-laura@sbcglobal.net