

gearing up

THE 2015 LEGISLATIVE SESSION



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As I write, the start of the 2015 legislative session is just over two weeks away. Like prior years, it will be busy for members of the Legislative Action Committee (LAC). We have the task of reviewing each bill (In 2014 there were 786 bills and resolutions introduced) and determining if the proposed legislation will have an impact on community associations. If the answer is yes, the bill is designated as low, medium, high, or critical priority. Our greatest effort will be given to those bills given high or critical status.

Often a bill is introduced at the last minute. For example, in 2014 legislation was introduced that would limit a community association's ability to determine how rentals would be handled in their community. It seems apparent that this legislation used the camouflage approach in hopes of avoiding public scrutiny. The approach did not have the intended outcome. Thanks to homeowners serving on the LAC we were able to assemble a dozen individuals who attended and testified at a committee hearing on the bill. The legislation did not pass out of committee.

During the 45 day session in 2014 there were over a half dozen occasions that members of the LAC were on Capitol Hill meeting with legislators, testifying before committees, or simply monitoring how bills were unfolding. In addition, our lobbyist is at the Capitol each day of the session acting as boots on the ground.

I suspect that all past and present members of the LAC have on at least one occasion wondered why they volunteered to serve. Often, the demands on their time can become overly burdensome. No volunteer is compensated. Only our lobbyist and the executive director receive compensation. I suspect the underlying reason we serve is that we believe we can make a positive difference.

I can attest that we are succeeding. Thanks to the work of many individuals past and present, community associations are better represented on Capitol Hill than ever before. It isn't always sunshine and roses, but what worthwhile ever is?