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January 30, 2024

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Honorable Delegate Marc Korman, Chair
Honorable Delegate Regina T. Boyce, Vice Chair
Environment and Transportation Committee
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: HB 279
Common Ownership Communities - Local Commissions - Requirements
Position: SUPPORT
Hearing Date: February 6, 2024

Dear Chairperson Korman, Vice Chairperson Boyce, and Committee Members:

This letter is submitted on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Action Committee (“MD-LAC”) of the Community Associations Institute (“CAI”). CAI represents individuals and professionals who reside in or work with community associations (condominiums, homeowners’ associations, and cooperatives) throughout the State of Maryland.

MD-LAC supports the general objective of HB 279 to establish consistency and structure among local common ownership community dispute resolution commissions. The Bill provides requirements for local common ownership commissions when being established by their local governments. As provided in the bill each local common ownership commission, if established, must be made up of owners or members in a common ownership community and individuals that represent professions associated with common ownership communities. The local governments

Maryland Legislative Action Committee
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will decide how many members the commission should have and will designate representatives from the local government and agencies to serve as non-voting members of the commission. House Bill 279 also provides that the local commission shall examine the needs of common ownership communities and advise the county government and agencies on important matters involving them. This bill would also require common ownership communities to register with the local commission annually and provides several methods to collect reasonable fees for services provided by the local commissions. House Bill 279 also establishes that the common ownership commission shall develop educational and training opportunities for governing bodies to promote the operation of common ownership communities and advise local communities and managers of changes to laws and regulations that affect their communities. The local commissions also hear certain disputes between the governing bodies and the owners or members of the common ownership communities. As provided in HB 279, the decision of a local commission is binding on the parties but may be appealed to a court of competent jurisdiction.

We respectfully request that the Committee give HB 279 a favorable report. We are available to answer any questions the Committee Members may have. Please feel free to contact Lisa Harris Jones, lobbyist for the MD-LAC, at 410-366-1500, or by e-mail at lisa.jones@mdlobbyist.com, Vicki Caine, Chair of the MD-LAC, by e-mail at to MDLacChair1@gmail.com, or Kathleen M. Elmore, Esquire, member, MD-LAC for Community Associations Institute at 410-544-6644, or by E-mail at kelmore@el-grp.com.

Sincerely,

Kathleen M. Elmore

Kathleen Elmore, Esquire
Member, CAI MD-LAC

Vicki Caine

Vicki Caine
Chair, CAI MD-LAC

cc : Honorable Delegate Marvin Holmes, *via email*