



Senate Bill 130 – Environment – Water – Individual Unit Meters

Position: Unfavorable

The REALTORS® oppose SB 130 which, among other provisions, appears to empower local housing authorities to install water meters on certain private property without consent of the owner.

As drafted, the legislation states that the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) or a local housing authority “MAY INSTALL INDIVIDUAL UNIT METERS FOR ANY COMBINATION OF APARTMENT HOUSES OR DWELLING UNITS.” The legislation does not specify that this authority is only limited to state financed housing or publicly owned property.

Although the legislation does not indicate that owners would have to reimburse DHCD or the local housing authority for the expense of installing the meters, the owners should have control over their property and expensive capital improvements that impact the operation of the building and tenants.

Finally, while the legislation seeks to allocate water costs more fairly among tenants, it doesn't address another fairness issue: the account for the leased property's water bill is connected to the property itself rather than the bill payer. As a result, when water fees are not paid, the owner of the dwelling unit, rather than the tenant who may have been paying the bill directly, is saddled with any unpaid fees and penalties.

The REALTORS® believe this legislation should be explicitly limited to State or local publicly owned property.

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