



## **House Bill 239 – State Real Estate Commission – Property Managers - Registration**

### **Position: Support**

Maryland REALTORS® support HB 239 which requires certain property managers to be either licensed by the Maryland Real Estate Commission or to be registered with the Maryland Real Estate Commission.

This legislation seeks to close an enforcement hole in the Real Estate Commission's powers. Real estate managers currently are not required to be licensed. As a result, if a real estate practitioner's license is terminated because of law violations related to property management, that individual can open a new office the next day and continue their rental property activities. The former licensee would only be prohibited from conducting further sales activities.

HB 239 gives the Real Estate Commission additional authority to register certain property managers if those individuals are not already licensed. If a licensee loses their license due to prohibited and sanctioned activity, that individual cannot open the same business the next day.

In the last 6 years, the Real Estate Commission has paid out more than \$150,000 in real estate guarantee fund payments to consumers who were harmed by real estate property managers. HB 239 is a targeted approach that seeks to require registration of individuals similar to the licensees brought before the Real Estate Commission – mostly independent operators managing smaller properties for many different owners.

HB 239 also increases the consumers remedies when working with a property manager who is registered with the Real Estate Commission. Although the consumer would not be able to access the guarantee fund, the consumer would have the benefit of a surety bond.

HB 239 gives consumers additional protection and helps the Real Estate Commission close a hole in its enforcement authority. For these reasons, the Maryland REALTORS® recommend a favorable report.

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