

**HB0844 – Housing and Community Development –  
Common Ownership Community Website  
(Sponsors - Del. Cheryl Pasteur / Del. Marvin Holmes)  
Testimony given by Linda Dorsey-Walker on 2/28/23**

Good afternoon. I am Linda Dorsey-Walker, former HOA President of the Lyonswood HOA in Owings Mills, Maryland. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in FAVOR of HB0844, with an Amendment.

Specifically, instead of Section 2-303 Subsection (C) (1) requiring that the Proposed Common Owner Communities website be updated annually with a hyperlink to the websites of all Common Ownership Communities in the state that the following language replace Subsection (C) (1):

**(C) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL MAKE PUBLICALLY AVAILABLE ON THE WEBSITE ANNUALLY BY JUNE 1**

**THE NAMES OF ALL COMMON OWNERSHIP COMMUNITIES IN THE STATE, AND THE NAMES, TITLES, FULL CONTACT INFORMATION OF ALL CURRENT BOARD OFFICERS, DIRECTORS, AND THE PROPERTY MANAGEMENT COMPANY, IF APPLICABLE, AND A HYPERLINK TO EACH LOCAL COMMON OWNERSHIP COMMUNITY'S WEBSITE.**

This Amendment is necessary because many Common Ownership Communities do not maintain a website that lists the referenced information.

Having worked with and heard the many grievances of homeowners from many communities, I can share that COC Website would help resolve the following problems:

1. Property Management Companies that control HO's but never share the names, titles or contact information for currently elected officers, so that when homeowners have a problem with an uncooperative Property Management Company, no one knows to whom the problem should be reported.

2. Currently there is no website to which homeowners can turn to prove they have a right to certain information or access. (In a community near my own residents were never informed of the death of their HOA President who died three years earlier. That HOA was no longer authorized to function as a business entity in Maryland, but no one knew it.
3. Many Property Management Companies filter information that is shared with residents. A Clearinghouse website is much more likely to make owners aware that they need not pay some of the many hidden fees that President Biden referred to last week.
4. If a public health or safety issue arises after a Property Management Company closes, it is imperative that residents and First Responders know to contact, especially when a child is missing.
5. When excessive or intrusive covenant guidelines are enforced, there is presently no information clearinghouse to which Homeowners can make easy reference, sometimes needlessly necessitating the expenditure of thousands of dollars to resolve a simple dispute.
6. Because legislation is proposed each year, some of which may be popular and assumed to have passed and other unpopular laws quietly pass with little notice, it is difficult to know exactly which laws now govern home owners at any moment.
7. Finally, many Common ownership community members are seniors or disabled, and lack the means to hire attorneys or run from office to office to protect their rights or become informed about their current responsibilities under the law. That lack of up-to-date information can sometimes results in loss of a home.

I urge the Committee give HB0844 a FAVORABLE report with suggested amendment.