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TO: Members of the Economic Matters Committee

FROM: The Southern Maryland Association of REALTORS®

RE: House Bill 913 - Charles County - Governing Bodies of Common Ownership Communities - Member Training

POSTION: Favorable with Amendments

Chair Valderrama, Vice Chair Charkoudian, and members of the committee,

On behalf of the Southern Maryland Association of REALTORS® (SMAR), representing real estate professionals serving Charles, Calvert, and St. Mary’s Counties, we respectfully ask for a favorable report on HB913, with amendments.

Homeowners associations play a critical role in protecting property values and maintaining community standards. For many Maryland families, purchasing a home within an HOA represents their largest financial investment. The governance of these associations directly impacts housing stability, resale value, mortgage eligibility, and overall consumer confidence in the real estate market.

Although HOA board members serve as volunteers, they are entrusted with substantial fiduciary and operational responsibilities including reserve funding, budgeting, infrastructure oversight, covenant enforcement, and compliance with state and local laws. When boards operate without sufficient knowledge or training, the consequences can be significant.

HB 913 establishes a reasonable baseline of education to ensure that those serving in these important roles are equipped with foundational knowledge. We believe this requirement will enhance transparency, accountability, and sound decision-making. While some may worry that mandatory training could discourage participation, it may instead serve as a constructive screening tool — encouraging committed, prepared individuals to step forward in service of their communities.

SMAR respectfully requests two amendments to strengthen the bill’s long-term effectiveness and practicality:

- **First**, we request that the validity of a completed training certificate be extended from the proposed three (3) years to five (5) years. Given that HOA board service often spans multiple years and that governance fundamentals do not frequently change, a five-year certification period would reduce administrative burdens while maintaining educational integrity.
- **Second**, we request clarification regarding the expected length and scope of the required training curriculum. Specifically, we recommend that the bill provide further guidance ensuring that the program



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be of comparable length and structure to similar HOA training programs already implemented in nearby jurisdictions.

Well-governed associations strengthen housing markets, protect homeowner investments, and contribute to community stability. With the proposed amendments, HB 913 will provide a balanced, practical framework that supports volunteer board members while safeguarding the interests of Maryland homeowners.

For these reasons, the Southern Maryland Association of REALTORS® respectfully urges the Committee to issue a **favorable report with amendments** on HB 913.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Please contact SMAR's Advocacy & Communications Director, Zach Hill, at zach@somdrealtors.com with any questions.