



CAI Texas/TCAA LEGISLATIVE SESSION UPDATE

TCAA Minute – March 29, 2021

Community Association Legislation

We are now past the halfway point of the Texas legislative session, and the CAI-TCAA team is following dozens of bills that have the potential to impact community associations and neighborhoods. Some high-profile bills advancing through the process include:

SB 30 (West) seeks to establish a uniform mechanism for removing racist property deed restrictions barring families of color from moving into these homes. The bill, which has been approved by the Senate Committee on State Affairs and is likely to soon be considered by the full Senate, allows for these restrictions to be removed from real property records through the county clerk's office of the county in which the real property is located. The bill establishes a process for that removal and requires the attorney general to develop a form for the county clerk offices.

SB 581 (Bettencourt) relates to permissible regulation by a property owners' association of religious displays. The bill, which was just approved by the Senate Committee on Local Government, outlines the extent to which a property owner's association may restrict some displays of religious items at a residence. The bill applies only to a display that is motivated by sincere religious belief, and a property owners' association is allowed to prohibit displays that threaten public health or safety, violate other laws, or that are patently offensive to the passerby for reasons other than religious content.

CAI-TCAA Finishes A Successful Texas Legislative Week

The CAI-TCAA team and supporters from across Texas spent the entire week of March 22-26 learning about community association policy issues and virtually connecting with state legislators and staff. Legislative Week was an opportunity to explain the benefits of community associations and the importance of protecting the quality of life in Texas neighborhoods.

In a typical legislative session, this event would be conducted in-person at the Texas capitol. This year, however, most of the advocacy was conducted virtually in consideration of the ongoing pandemic and related safety protocols. Despite these limitations, the outreach was a success, and the CAI-TCAA team is grateful for all of the participation and support from community association staff and members across the state.

Texas Rent Relief Plan Off To Slow Start

The \$1.3 billion rent relief program funded by the federal government and managed by the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs has fallen far short of expectations since it began operating a month ago. While the website has been live and open for applications since mid-February, only 134 Texans were approved for payments as of Wednesday. After the initial launch of the program, tenants and landlords quickly complained about the program's accessibility. Among the top issues: The website would not allow applicants

to enter their phone numbers, no one answered the phone number provided, and people could not check their application status.

TDHCA points to “major system issues” that occurred with the initial website, and has had to pivot to a new website and system. A department spokesperson also noted that the state was creating a \$1 billion rental assistance program “completely from scratch,” without program guidelines or mechanisms for delivery provided by the federal government.

Get Involved

CAI and TCAA hope to hear from you about the issues of concern to you and your neighbors, and we also encourage you to share your support of community associations with your local legislators. For more information on the Texas Legislature and updates on our activities and events, please visit caionline.org/txlac and txcaa.org. To make a contribution [CLICK HERE](#).