

GOVERNOR CRIST SIGNS KEY FLORIDA SENATE BILL

Senate Bill 1196 - RELATING TO COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS

The "Distressed Condo Relief Act"

Signed by Governor Charlie Crist

On June 1, 2010, Florida Governor Charlie Crist signed the final version of SB 1196, passing the bill into law. CAI members' timely emails to Governor Crist played a crucial role in communicating the necessity of this bill. The Florida community association industry will benefit from many of its provisions. By coordinating with CAI's Florida Legislative Alliance, CAI's members were able to send a clear and unified message to Tallahassee. All members that voiced their support to the governor for SB 1196 share in this victory.

Provisions that will benefit community associations include:

- A delay in the compliance requirement with existing elevator retro-fit requirements
- The ability for associations, by vote of the residents, to opt out of sprinkler retro-fit requirements in common areas
- Granting associations the right to collect rent from tenants of delinquent unit owners
- A doubling of the amount of back-due assessments associations can collect from banks to the lesser of 12 months or 1% of the total mortgage
- Protections for sensitive unit owner information
- Provisions that would encourage investors to purchase units in distressed projects to stabilize the condominium market

The continued economic downturn and housing collapse has created an even greater need for the protections and improvements contained in this new law. SB 1196 will enable Florida to better meet the challenges of a depressed economy and will help encourage growth and recovery in the housing market. The needed flexibility and new tools for associations found within the bill will have a direct impact on association finances and regulations creating a brighter tomorrow for us all.