

Georgia LAC Raids Capitol, Pushes Priority Lien Bill

On February 22, 2010, CAI's Georgia Legislative Action Committee (GA-LAC) hosted its second meet and greet with state legislators in the Capitol building in Atlanta. The goal was to educate representatives and senators on the importance of priority lien legislation supported by the LAC.

Members of GA-LAC spoke with over 20 legislators throughout the morning and also interacted with legislative staff and guests who were intrigued by CAI's mission. Among the dignitaries to visit with GA-LAC staff was Senator Don Balfour, Chairman of the Rules Committee; Senator Barry Loudermilk, Chairman of the Science and Technology Committee; and Senator Jack Murphy, Chairman of the Banking and Financial Institutions Committee.

The meet and greet was an attempt by the GA-LAC to step up its efforts to pass a priority lien bill to provide financial relief to community associations in the state. At the conclusion of the event, Senate Judiciary Chairman Bill Hamrick introduced GA-LAC's priority lien bill as [SB 136](#).

Priority lien legislation continues to be a critical issue for community associations as they struggle with collecting past due assessments and foreclosures. If passed, Georgia would join 15 other states in granting priority lien rights for up to 6 months of past due assessments at foreclosure. Since delinquency rates are emerging as a key mortgage-underwriting factor for home purchases in community associations, ensuring that such fees are paid protects all residents within a community.

Community associations with statutory or covenanted rights to assess members for the care of property operated for the common benefit and enjoyment of their members have faced an increased burden of expenses and obligations in light of the recent rash of property.

In addition to Priority Lien legislation, GA-LAC will be contending with

legislation that would ban covenants regulating the installation of solar panels within homeowners associations. This issue has emerged as some homeowners have challenged prohibitions on the installation of solar panels in their homes. GA-LAC is working to ensure that a responsible approach to solar energy is taken when assessing the impact of such a covenant ban on association rights and responsibilities.

The Georgia Capitol meet-and-greet represented the second consecutive year GA-LAC has kicked-off their legislative session with a pro-active and engaging event to grab legislators attention and push the priorities of their legislative agenda. Moving forward, GA-LAC hopes to continue incorporating such events into their lobbying strategy within Georgia.