

# Community Trends®



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## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

**GEORGE GREATREX, ESQ.**  
PARTNER, HILL WALLACK LLP  
LEGISLATIVE ACTION COMMITTEE CHAIR

As I've written in this column each of the past few years, the September issue of *Community Trends*® is my favorite of the year...there's always so much good stuff in it! It's commonly known as the "LAC Issue" because all of the articles are about legislative, regulatory and legal issues affecting common interest communities in New Jersey, written by members of the CAI Legislative Action Committee – NJ. Oh, if you haven't heard, your NJ LAC was named the "Legislative Action Committee of the Year" by CAI National! Wow...that's right...best in the country! So, what do we do from here? We keep working hard for common interest communities like yours...

This year has been challenging in so many ways. While we have been preoccupied with COVID-19 issues, we have been pursuing other important legislative and regulatory priorities too. These are some of the issues you'll read about in these pages:

• **Restrictions on Debt Collection Activities:**

Various bills have been introduced this year (both in Trenton and in Washington) which attempt to curtail, if not completely shut down the collection of valid debts during the COVID-19 pandemic and for a period of time after New Jersey's state of emergency is lifted. Thomas Martin, Esq., a lawyer and former chair of the NJ LAC, reviews these bills and explains how your LAC has successfully opposed any legislative efforts that would prevent CICs from collecting overdue assessments and related charges.

- **Electric Vehicle Charging Stations:** Advancing "green energy" technology brings with it both benefits and complications, and this topic is a good example of that. Matthew Earle, Esq., a lawyer and the LAC's go-to resource on tech issues who wrote about this issue in each of the last two year's editions, updates us on legislative efforts to promote the use of electric vehicles, and how we are working with the legislature to make sure those laws are fair to our communities.

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- **To Open the Pool or Not Open the Pool:** Paul Raetsch and Steve Kroll, homeowner leader members of the LAC and former members of their respective HOA Boards, discuss this most difficult of decisions made by a Board of Trustees this year...or any year.
- **Adequate Reserves and Benefits Derived:** For those of you who have lived or worked in a newer common interest community still under the control of the developer/declarant, you're probably familiar with these terms, but you also probably don't really know what they mean. Well, join the club! David Ramsey,

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Esq., a lawyer and long-serving CAI loyalist, will report on the proposed regulations recently announced by the DCA and how your LAC, under his leadership on this issue, has finally brought some clarity to this important aspect in the early life of a CIC in New Jersey.

- **CAI-NJ's Political Action Committee (CA-PAC) Supports NJ-LAC in Political Efforts:** CA-PAC's mission of initiating and advocating for helpful legislation, and opposing harmful legislation, costs money. Not that your LAC members receive any of that money (we don't), but to be effective in what we do requires the help of lobbying professionals (who get paid for their services by NJ-LAC) and attendance at functions which gives NJ-LAC the opportunity to interact directly with the lawmakers and their staffers (which also costs money). Chris Florio, Esq., a lawyer and former President of CAI-

NJ, reports on how the New Jersey Chapter's Political Action Committee assists us in NJ-LAC's mission, and how you can help.

This is the issue of *Community Trends*® you should keep on the top of the legislative and legal resource pile on your desk at all times. Many thanks to the authors of the articles in this issue, and all members of our award-winning LAC, for their unselfish and tireless efforts on behalf all of us who live and work in common interest communities in New Jersey. I encourage you to share the information in these pages with your board members, homeowners, property managers, and legal and accounting professionals. This edition and the information it provides is just another example of the many great benefits of membership in CAI.

Stay safe out there! See you here next month...■