

# Community Trends



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## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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In connection with this month's theme of "Board Basics," note that one of our major legislative initiatives is mandatory board member training. Several years ago, Assemblywoman Annette Quijano introduced a bill that would require the Department of Community Affairs ("DCA") to implement a board member training regime that would require directors to receive at least three (3) hours of training regarding, among other things, "good business practices, model record keeping procedures, legal requirements for boards, the making of a budget and maintaining reserve accounts, [and] information on various State entities available to assist the board." The current bill number is A2449 and it is also sponsored by Assemblyman Benjie Wimberly.

The bill in its current form is not ideal, as it provides no specifics regarding the amount and format of the training that the DCA would require, and who would provide it.

The New Jersey Legislative Action Committee (NJ-LAC) has proposed alternative legislation that would require 3 hours of board member training, and organizations like CAI would be permitted to provide this training. In that connection, CAI-NJ has been hard at work preparing online training modules that would meet the requirements of our alternative legislation.

We believe that this training is critical so that those elected to boards for the first time are exposed to basic information regarding the need to act in open meetings, reserve funding requirements, and the like. We also believe that the bill will provide significant positive exposure to CAI.

In addition, Assemblywoman Quijano also introduced legislation (A2450) that would require the DCA to establish a property manager licensing regime. The NJ-LAC is not in favor of the bill in its current format, as it leaves far too much to chance. In that connection, NJ-LAC Vice-Chair Ed San George testified before the Assembly Housing Committee regarding problems with the bill, which was passed out of committee.

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Notwithstanding the passage of manager licensing out of committee, based on discussions with key legislators we are very optimistic that we will be able to effectuate important changes to ensure that any manager licensing regime is not overly burdensome, and that managers with appropriate experience and credentials will be able to use that background to obtain licenses without the need for any burdensome training or testing.

Accordingly, we are hard at work preparing an alternative manager licensing bill and coordinating same with CAI National to ensure compliance with their policies. ■