

Comments in Support of House Bill 4666, a Bill Restoring Some Balance to the Manufactured Housing Commission

September 14, 2021

Presented by Holly Hook, Commissioner, Manufactured Housing Commission, President of the Michigan Mobile Home Residents for Affordable Housing, and Resident of Swartz Creek Estates, Swartz Creek, Michigan

Chairman Hauck and members of the House Regulatory Reform Committee:

Many thanks for this chance to express strong support for House Bill 4666 (sponsored by Rep. Jeff Yaroch), which will restore balance to the Mobile Home Commission by adding an appointee who is from a consumer advocacy group or a legal aid group. Currently, only two appointees out of nine represent residents.

I live in Swartz Creek Estates and was appointed on as a Commissioner on the Manufactured Housing Commission in the role of an appointee who is “a representative of an organization whose membership consists of mobile home residents.” I am a co-founder of a statewide residents’ association called the Michigan Mobile Home Residents for Affordable Housing, established in 2019.

House Bill 4666 would revise the Mobile Home Commission Act to reflect changes made by former Gov. Granholm’s Executive Order 2010-09, in which the Mobile Home Commission was renamed the Manufactured Housing Commission and which two appointees were removed:

- An appointee who is a resident of a mobile home park (prior to the executive order there was one mobile home resident appointed representing parks with 100 or more sites, and one resident representing parks with less than 100 sites);
- An appointee who is an operator of a mobile home park (prior to the executive order there were 2 park operators representing parks with 100 or more sites, and one resident representing parks with less than 100 sites).

The Executive Order indicated that “reducing the membership of the Manufactured Housing Commission will contribute to a smaller and more efficient state government.” It’s my understanding that the reduction in appointees was needed because the Department was having difficulty getting a quorum for Commission meetings, and the operator and resident appointments were the most challenging (in terms of securing an appointee and in getting consistent participation).

While I have great respect for my colleagues on the Commission, there are times when an additional resident advocate’s perspective is needed. As mentioned above, the current board includes only one resident appointee, one appointee representing a mobile home park resident organization or association. **The other appointees are: two** park operator representatives, a representative of financial institutions, a representative of organized labor, an elected official of a local government, a licensed mobile home dealer, and a manufacturer of mobile homes.

As for the historic challenges of getting resident representatives on the Commission: residents of mobile home parks come from all walks of life and every socio-economic background. But most of us work full-time and taking time off to attend quarterly commission meetings means lost wages. An appointee representing “An individual from a consumer advocacy group or a legal aid group” wouldn’t have this same hardship, yet still be familiar with the challenges facing residents of mobile home parks.

There are legal aid offices providing services in all 83 counties, who help low-income residents with housing issues, including residents of mobile home parks. Further, there are numerous organizations that would fall under the term “consumer advocacy groups,” including tenants’ rights groups, civil legal law firms, fair housing centers, foreclosure prevention programs, eviction and homeless prevention programs, and community action agencies.

In closing, I urge you to vote “yes” on HB 4666. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions: hollyannehook84@yahoo.com .