

I AM ASHAMED OF US

Lloyd L. Rochambeau, SMMRA President

GSMOL lobbyist Esperanza Ross reported that over 1,400 mobile home owners had sent letters or e-mails urging support for AB 1269 which was before the Senate Judiciary Committee this past week. Sounds good doesn't it? Well think again.

AB 1269 by Assemblymember Mark Stone is a bill to finally provide a measure of true enforcement of the MRL (Mobilehome Residency Law), something that has been needed for over 30 years. Heretofore, a homeowner had to hire an attorney to pursue justice when Park management was violating one or more of the laws intended to protect mobilehome owners. Out of an estimated 100,000 violations, fewer than 200 to 300 suits have been filed. Therefore thousands of violations are basically ignored. The bill passed the Judiciary Committee by a vote of five ayes to two noes. Assembly Housing and Community Development has approved the bill, which would establish a process for the investigation and mediation of the Mobilehome Residency Law (MRL) at the Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH)

Enforcement, or the lack thereof, has been sought for years, to no avail, and finally here is a chance to get some teeth into the MRL.

So over 1,400 of us gave lip service to the concept, yet there are possibly a minimum of 250,000 adult mobile home owners who could have spoken up and asked for support by this committee. Pretty sad response, is it not? Let's bring it down to North San Diego County. With over a hundred parks, there must be close to 20,000 M/H owners.

It's doubtful if more than 100 homeowners gave their written support. That makes me ashamed of us and causes me to ask whether you give a damn or not? No one asked for money. While some homeowners actually showed up in person, no one expected you to be there.

Apathy is a huge problem. That is until your park owner asks for a \$100.00 or more increase in your space rent. Then you will howl like a banshee and show up demanding your Park HOA or SMMRA to fight for you. You, who may not be paying a measly ten dollars a year to each association, (if you ever did).

One major problem is communication. Communication beyond a web site or an e-mail to ask for your help is expensive. My park has control over our Newsletter, so we can get the word out most times. But many Park Newsletters are controlled by the Park Owner or Managers, and any attempts to inform homeowners are censored. By the way, those newsletters do not cost the Park Owner a dime, the advertising to the publisher pays for the newsletter.

AB 1269 is now going to the Appropriations Committee. There should be quick approval, since the bill's costs are covered by the mobilehome owners through a \$5.00 yearly fee. As it moves through the different committees, opposition by the WMA (Park Owners) will intensify. They will spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to defeat it. WHY? Because they like it just the way it has been. The status quo is just their cup of tea.

The question is, are you folks going to get off your butts and fight for yourselves?