



Delaware Housing Coalition

P.O. Box 1633 • Dover, DE 19903-1633

(302) 678-2286 • FAX (302) 678-8645

www.housingforall.org

www.whynimby.org

June 1, 2011

On Rent Justification in Manufactured Home Communities

The Delaware Housing Coalition (DHC) is dedicated to making affordable housing available in every Delaware community and to all Delawareans. We advocate the creation and maintenance of a sufficient inventory of safe, decent, and affordable housing to meet this need.

Too many of the state's households live in precarious housing situations, either unable to obtain a stable housing situation or unable to remain in one.

No households are more precariously housed than manufactured home owners on leased land. Owning a home in an investor-owned community represents a major risk of long-term housing instability, loss of equity, and dispossession.

Manufactured housing was at one time a form of affordable housing of choice, because the affordability gap was slight or nonexistent. As parts of the state succumb to new population influxes and land use trends, the residents of investor-owned manufactured housing communities can suffer from having to bear "all that the market will bear." It is a deeply troubled form of housing tenure which needs systemic remedies.

In the absence of major reform, buttressing existing manufactured housing law with a clear and thoughtful rent justification process makes good sense. A proposal such as Senate Bill #66, to provide the home owners or their association recourse in the event of a lot rent increase, and to give the investor an opportunity to establish a rationale, is "intended to ensure that rents are reasonable and that home owners have the opportunity to be heard before they are established."

We cannot help but agree with such an effort and are grateful to the bill's authors and sponsors.

Ken Smith
Executive Director

Board of Directors

Karen Curtis
Lorraine deMeurisse
Leslie Holland

Sarah Keifer
Trish Kelleher
Jocelyn McBride

Dorothy Medeiros
Joe L. Myer
Veronica Oliver

Brenda Osborne
Sandy Spence
Susan Starrett

Van Temple
Amy Walls
Serena Williams