

MHI NEWS & UPDATES

January 24, 2018

Moving Toward a Better Regulatory Climate for Manufactured Housing

Last week, the Senate Banking Committee again advanced the nomination of Brian Montgomery to the full Senate. President Trump nominated Montgomery in September 2017 to serve as the Assistant Secretary for the Department of Housing and lead the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) as its Commissioner. This followed almost five months of speculation that he would be the President's nominee. While the Senate Banking Committee voted to advance his nomination to the Senate last November, since the full Senate did not hold a vote prior to adjourning for the holidays, the Committee had to revote. Montgomery previously served as the FHA Commissioner under President George W. Bush from 2005 to 2009. If confirmed, he will again oversee HUD's regulation of manufactured housing.

Montgomery has historically been an ally for manufactured housing. During his confirmation process, MHI worked with him and members of the Senate Banking Committee to highlight the changes that need to be made in HUD's regulation of manufactured housing. As a result of this outreach, Senator Tim Scott (R-SC), Chairman of the Housing Subcommittee, submitted questions to Montgomery about HUD's regulatory overreach of the manufactured housing industry. He asked Montgomery to state in writing his views about HUD's regulations governing manufactured housing and whether the current framework ensures affordability and access. Referencing President Trump's Executive Order requiring all federal agencies to re-examine their rules and reduce the regulatory burden on the American public, Montgomery stated, "We need to make sure FHA's manufactured housing rules undergo a rigorous cost-benefit analysis to ensure we are balancing important product safety considerations with affordability and access. If confirmed, you have my commitment this will be a priority."

This response by Montgomery, which is similar to responses given previously by HUD Secretary Ben Carson and Deputy Secretary Pamela Patenaude during their confirmation proceedings, reinforces MHI's ongoing and aggressive efforts with Congress and the Administration to improve the regulatory climate for manufactured housing at HUD.

A more cooperative regulatory environment for manufactured housing is long overdue. At the end of 2017, HUD announced administrative changes within the Office of Manufactured Housing Programs. As the review of HUD's regulation of manufactured housing moves forward, MHI will continue working to change HUD's approach to regulating manufactured housing, including elevating the role of manufactured housing within HUD, to ensure the industry can innovate and produce homes with the features that hardworking Americans are seeking.

MHI has presented Secretary Carson and his senior leadership with a series of recommendations to improve the regulatory climate for manufactured housing at HUD, including providing examples of burdensome regulations and enforcement such as intrusive installation requirements, shifting guidelines on alternative construction, and unnecessary increases in inspections without cause. Additionally, MHI continues to stress that HUD needs to implement recommendations from the Manufactured Housing Consensus Committee for revisions to the HUD Code in a timely manner.

As the only trade association officially registered to lobby on behalf of the manufactured housing industry in Washington, MHI will continue to work with the Administration's key housing leaders and Congress to ensure that

a more cooperative regulatory environment is achieved so that regulatory initiatives do not increase costs or limit consumer choice for manufactured housing.

If you have any questions, please contact MHI's Government Affairs Department at 703-229-6208 or MHIgov@mfghome.org.

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