

TURNING THE PAGE TO 2010

We are off, and running! Wow! I'm not really sure where 2009 went, it seemed to fly right by us. And, so many people I speak with are ready to start a new year!

The FMO will have a busy legislative session, as usual. I am very excited about our bill this year. **Senate Bill 1016** has been filed by Senator Dennis Jones, R-Seminole, and **House Bill 513** has been filed by Representative Mike Horner, R-Kissimmee, and Co-Sponsored by Representative Evan Jenne, D-Ft. Lauderdale.

These bills will grant mobile home owners, through their homeowners association, a new opportunity to purchase their park. This new right of first refusal will be triggered when a park is slated to close due to a change in use of the land. In addition, the bills direct the Florida Housing Finance Corporation to use its programs to provide opportunities and develop incentives for residents to purchase their parks. This might include the issuance of revenue bonds.

My goal in my efforts on your behalf is to protect and preserve the lifestyle you enjoy in mobile home parks and manufactured home communities. In order to do this, your parks must remain OPEN. Homeowners Associations will play a unique and important role in this process and yours will need to be prepared to take action very quickly if there is notice of a park closure due to change in use. Our position is that if the park owner wants to get out of the business of owning your park, that you should have the first opportunity to purchase it!

Last Session the Senate sent a strong message and passed language out of that chamber due to the relentless work of Senate President Pro-Tempore Mike Fasano, R-New Port Richey, and, Senator Nancy Detert, R-Venice. Unfortunately the House Rules prevented committee consideration of the bill in spite of the strong efforts of Representative Evan Jenne, D-Ft. Lauderdale, and, Representative Doug Holder, R-Sarasota.

FMO is in constant dialogue about this issue with FMHA and we intend to have a different outcome this year. They have agreed to work with us on this issue.

I am always so pleased when I hear from FMO members: "How can I help?" It would be great if you would pick up the phone, send an email, or write a letter to your Senator and Representative. Ask them to PLEASE support Senate Bill 1016 and House Bill 513. It is important to you, their constituents, to keep our parks open!

The 2010 Regular Session starts on Tuesday, March 2, and is scheduled to conclude on April 30. There will be lots happening between now and then and please know that I will work as hard as I can on your behalf.

On a personal note, I wish for each of you and yours a prosperous, healthy, and happy New Year.