Homeowners associations hope to tweak new bill

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SALEM — New legislation navigating through the Senate has the potential to impact homeowners associations nationwide, including dozens in the Upstate.

Senate Bill 30 is one of five bills that, if passed, could change the way homeowner-sassociations handle business.

Dubbed the South Carolina Homeowner's Association Act, the bills stands out as the most prominent that will affect homeowners locally, said Kevin McCracken of the property owners' association at Keowee Key.

"This bill was introduced by Sen. Darrell Jackson," he said. "It's been proposed in order to protect consumers, but we see some problems with the bill as part of the South Carolina Chapter in the Legislative Action Committee."

The committee has drafted proposed changes to the legislation. McCracken said the idea behind the bill is a good one, but it needs some tweaks.

The bill would require all community associations to register with the Department of Consumer Affairs. Because these associations are all non-profits, the LAC argues that it is unnecessary for another state agency to be burdened with a second registration.

The bill would also require community association's register the name and address of each individual lot and homeowner with the DCA. The LAC said this is an invasion of privacy that could lead to identity theft and other fraudulent crimes.

Each association would have to pay an annual fee of $10 per homeowner.

"This would cost Keowee Key $24,000," McCracken said. "It would also mean that to every other person across the state that lives in a homeowner's association, which is roughly 600,000 people, totaling $6 million. We believe this would increase a bureaucracy unnecessarily."

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