

Bug Bytes

By Valera Jesse

GEORGIA PEST CONTROL ASSOCIATION

2034 Beaver Ruin Road,

PO Box 2108

Norcross, GA 30071

770/417-1881—800/465-9827—FAX 770/417-1419

GPCA.ORG

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WDO LEGISLATION CONCLUSION

GPCA's goal in introducing WDO Legislation was to re-establish the requirement for homeowners to receive a WDO inspection when they bought a home.

HB 1048 passed through the House Ag & Consumers Affairs committee, but it did not come out of the Senate Ag committee (SB 417). With Day 30 (crossover day) set for Friday March 26, we had to acknowledge that while we were still 'alive', the reality of us succeeding in getting the legislation to the Floor for a vote was slim.

So, we took another tac.

Late last week, the Georgia Association of Realtors (GAR) lobbyist Keith Hatcher asked if we could meet to discuss the issue. Despite two years of discussion, GAR had not expected GPCA to actually introduce the legislation, and definitely they did not expect us to make inroads with Senators and Representatives. To their dismay, GAR has spent a considerable amount of their lobbying resources this session on HB 1048 and SB 417.

On Tuesday, March 23, we met with Mr. Hatcher. After a lively discussion, we offered to let our Bill stay in the Rules Committee and not push it further in the General Assembly this year. This agreement was contingent on GAR agreeing to come to the table and work toward a solution that would call attention and/or require a WDO inspection through a change in their Forms requirements.

Further our lobbyist Skin Edge asked Mr. Hatcher to accompany him to talk with Senator John Bulloch and Representative Tom McCall to tell them of our efforts to work through this issue without legislation. And, we finished the meeting by advising the GAR lobbyist that if efforts during the next months did not produce the needed change, we would reintroduce our WDO legislation in 2011 – a prospect that is most unfavorable to GAR.

So – what's next. Your Executive Board, co-chairs of legislative committee and the GPCA lobbyist will prepare a proposal for GAR's consideration. [Please keep in mind, GPCA has been asking the Realtors to work with us for over 2 years to do just this.] The legislative support of the WDO Bill and the work of our industry have pushed this effort to reality.

- 1 During the next six months, GPCA will be working tirelessly with GAR to achieve the goals of our original mission.*
- 2 We will be in contact with our Representatives and Senators to keep them apprised of the success – or failure – of our good faith efforts with the Realtors.*

- 3 We will be spending the PAC funds that you have provided. [It is not permitted to do donations when the General Assembly is in session.]

The Georgia Pest Control Association has made a lot of friends at the Capitol. You have talked sincerely with your elected officials and they have understood our cause. The GPCA lobbyist Skin Edge has worked diligently with lawmakers, negotiating and navigating the best way to ultimately succeed. We have learned that:

- a) our lawmakers consider us reliable, honest and professional*
- b) they trust our lobbyist*
- c) they want to protect consumers*

Thank you for all your calls and support. It has made all the difference.

Valera

*Valera Jessee, Executive Director
2034 Beaver Run Road
Norcross, GA 30071
770-417-1881
Valera@gpca.org*