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Industry proposals for inspection changes rebuffed by State Board

CHARLESTON – Industry proposals to modify some inspection reports for manufactured housing dealers were rebuffed Thursday by the state board that oversees manufactured housing in West Virginia.

Instead of accepting the proposals from a statewide meeting June 7, the West Virginia Manufactured Housing Construction and Safety Standards Board said discussions should continue on reforms to inspection reports that must be made by a dealer 60 days after a consumer handles his or her own installation. These are commonly known as “10b” forms in the industry.

West Virginia Housing Institute Inc., which represents the industry, argued the inspection reports as they are now shift inspection responsibilities to the dealers when they have no input in the installations. The Institute said the inspections, to bolster consumer-confidence, should be done by the state Division of Labor.

Opposition to the plan was spearheaded by Jack Albert of Cross Lanes, a consumer advocate on the board, and Steve Solomon of Morgantown, an industry representative.

Albert initially wanted to kill the proposal outright, but agreed to a suggestion by industry representative George Gunnell of Winfield that discussions continue toward modifying the plan to make it acceptable to the board and state authorities.

Mitch Woodrum, director of the manufactured housing section for the Division of Labor, and Andy Gallagher, Institute executive director, agreed to meet later to discuss possible modifications to the industry’s propels.

In other action, the State Board:

--Licensed for the 2012-13 year 31 manufacturers, including two new ones; 57 dealers, including five new ones; and 115 contractors, including six new ones. Applications are still coming in.

--Approved dealer licenses specifically to Alta Cima Corp. doing business as Factory Expo Home Centers, at Lillington, N.C., and Rocky Mount, Va., to sell homes into West Virginia.

--Licensed Champion Home Builders Inc. of Lillington, N.C., to sell homes in West Virginia.; and five contractors to do work in the state.

--Imposed fines of \$250 each on two dealers – one for using an unlicensed contractor to do work and one for buying from an unlicensed manufacturer.

--Imposed \$75 fines each on 14 companies for failing to properly report their work activity for the last quarter.

--Set its next meeting for Sept. 20.