**Frequently Asked Questions**

The Arizona Multihousing Association is working hard to grow its Better Government Fund (BGF) to more than $1 million on hand before the end of 2020. To fund this, the AMA Board of Directors recently approved its first members’ dues increase in over 12 years. Every penny of this $0.50 per unit assessment will go directly to the BGF. The same holds true for a $100 voluntary dues assessment (per member or per property) also approved by the Board. Below you’ll find some common questions about the BGF:

**What is the Better Government Fund?**

Because the Arizona rental housing industry requires marketplace freedom and the preservation of private property rights to thrive – and because these foundational elements often are attacked by politicians and special interests alike – our industry has an ongoing need to defend itself.

The AMA Better Government Fund, established in 2010, historically has been used to protect the state’s apartment industry from harmful legislation, to support candidates for office who support the rental housing industry and to fund the legal fight against civil actions that would severely curtail private property rights or financially harm Arizona’s rental housing community.

**Why does the AMA need a $1 million BGF?**

Nationally and locally, the political and media landscape is changing for rental housing providers. An undersupply of housing units and increasing aggression by self-styled “tenants’ rights advocates” and reporters have created the possibility of California-style overregulation and rent control in Arizona. Rather than “hoping for the best,” the AMA has made a strategic choice to proactively confront these challenges by growing the BGF. This fund will be used to:

* Preserve the statewide prohibition on rent control and inclusionary zoning.
* Oppose efforts to diminish private property rights in Arizona.
* Protect the careful balance of the Arizona Landlord-Tenant Act.
* Oppose efforts to lengthen the eviction process or add unnecessary and costly regulation.
* Support long-term solutions to increase the production of rental housing including affordable and workforce housing.
* Independently engage in political campaigns to support candidates who understand and help solve the issues facing the rental housing industry and to oppose candidates who are hostile towards rental owners and private property rights.
* Preserve key private property protections.
* Prepare for impending litigation related to private property rights. We must be prepared to fight back at the highest levels of the judicial system.

**What positive results have we had in the past because of the BGF?**

* **Supported grassroots mobilization efforts such as the South Scottsdale Alliance in reaction to hostile NIMBYism.** Apartment community builders seeking approval of their projects are often met with significant resistance by established neighborhoods. Groups like the South Scottsdale Alliance have been formed to educate the community on the positive aspects and economic benefits of quality developments, including apartments.
* **Contracted with Elliott Pollack to conduct a market study on Arizona’s Apartment Industry.** The study analyzed the economic impact of apartment communities statewide and provided an in-depth analysis of the current supply and demand of rental housing.
* **Independently supported political campaigns in statewide, legislative and local elections.**  BGF funds have been used to support pro-property rights and pro-housing candidates through legal independent expenditure campaigns.
* **Funded Superior Court-level appeals on eviction-related matters.** BGF funds were used successfully to finance landlord-tenant appeals in Pima County in order to prevent errant rulings or procedural matters from becoming precedent in Pima County as well as other Justice Courts.
* **Funded outside legal counsel to assist the AMA’s efforts in addressing County Property Tax valuation policy.** AMA’s efforts led to an adjustment in the Rule B calculation in Maricopa County after new developments or rehabilitated properties were hit with significant, unforeseen property tax increases.

**What else can I do to help defend our industry?**

To wait and hope is not a strategy the Arizona rental housing industry can afford to adopt in the face of such challenges and opposition. Our complacency now will cost us much more in the future.

With that in mind – and with the 2020 elections and a new legislative session looming – your AMA leadership is in the process of developing a comprehensive plan for the year ahead. Successfully surmounting the challenges ahead will require more than funding from our members. We will need you to get educated and get engaged, doing everything from making phone calls to sending emails to providing constructive criticism about our efforts. We will be back in touch soon (and frequently) with news and with requests for assistance.

Thank you in advance for your support of the AMA, the BGF and the Arizona rental housing industry. Together, we can meet these challenges and emerge victorious.