

First Regular Session
Sixty-ninth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO

INTRODUCED

LLS NO. 13-0772.02 Chuck Brackney x2295

SENATE BILL 13-183

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Carroll, Giron, Schwartz

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Fields,

Senate Committees
Local Government

House Committees

A BILL FOR AN ACT

101 CONCERNING WATER CONSERVATION MEASURES IN COMMON INTEREST
102 COMMUNITIES.

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://www.leg.state.co.us/billsummaries>.)

The bill amends current law to specify that restrictive covenants or declarations, bylaws, and rules and regulations of common interest communities that prohibit or limit xeriscape or drought-tolerant vegetation or require ground covering vegetation to consist of any amount of turf grass are contrary to public policy and unenforceable. The bill also

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
Capital letters indicate new material to be added to existing statute.
Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.

adds a definition of "xeriscape" to the "Colorado Common Interest Ownership Act" and says that a unit owners' association (association) may not prohibit the use of xeriscape or other drought-tolerant vegetative landscapes to provide ground covering and may not levy fines against unit owners for violations of declarations, bylaws, or rules and regulations of the association for failure to adequately water when water restrictions are in place and the unit owner waters in compliance with those restrictions.

1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

2 **SECTION 1.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 37-60-126, **amend**
3 (11) (a), (11) (b) (III), (11) (c) introductory portion, (11) (c) (I), and (11)
4 (c) (III) as follows:

5 **37-60-126. Water conservation and drought mitigation**
6 **planning - programs - relationship to state assistance for water**
7 **facilities - guidelines - water efficiency grant program - repeal.**

8 (11) (a) Any section of a restrictive covenant OR OF THE DECLARATION,
9 BYLAWS, OR RULES AND REGULATIONS OF A COMMON INTEREST
10 COMMUNITY, ALL AS DEFINED IN SECTION 38-33.3-103, C.R.S., that
11 prohibits or limits xeriscape, prohibits or limits the installation or use of
12 drought-tolerant vegetative landscapes, or requires cultivated vegetation
13 to consist ~~exclusively or primarily~~ WHOLLY OR PARTIALLY of turf grass is
14 hereby declared contrary to public policy and, on that basis, ~~that section~~
15 ~~of the covenant shall be~~ IS unenforceable. THIS PARAGRAPH (a) DOES NOT
16 PROHIBIT COMMON INTEREST COMMUNITIES FROM ADOPTING AND
17 ENFORCING DESIGN OR AESTHETIC GUIDELINES OR RULES THAT REQUIRE
18 DROUGHT-TOLERANT VEGETATIVE LANDSCAPES OR REGULATE THE TYPE,
19 NUMBER, AND PLACEMENT OF DROUGHT-TOLERANT PLANTINGS AND
20 HARDSCAPES THAT MAY BE INSTALLED ON THE UNIT OWNER'S PROPERTY
21 OR PROPERTY FOR WHICH THE UNIT OWNER IS RESPONSIBLE.

22 (b) As used in this subsection (11):

1 (III) "Turf grass" means continuous plant coverage consisting of
2 ~~hybridized~~ NONNATIVE grasses ~~that~~; OR GRASSES THAT HAVE NOT BEEN
3 HYBRIDIZED FOR ARID CONDITIONS WHICH, when regularly mowed, form
4 a dense growth of leaf blades and roots.

5 (c) Nothing in this subsection (11) ~~shall preclude~~ PRECLUDES the
6 executive board of a common interest community from taking
7 enforcement action against a unit owner who allows his or her existing
8 landscaping to die OR GO DORMANT; except that:

9 (I) ~~Such~~ NO enforcement action shall ~~be suspended during a~~
10 ~~period~~ REQUIRE THAT A UNIT OWNER WATER IN VIOLATION of water use
11 restrictions declared by the jurisdiction in which the common interest
12 community is located, in which case the unit owner shall ~~comply with~~
13 WATER HIS OR HER LANDSCAPING APPROPRIATELY BUT NOT IN EXCESS OF
14 any watering restrictions imposed by the water provider for the common
15 interest community;

16 (III) ~~Once the drought emergency is lifted~~; IN ANY ENFORCEMENT
17 ACTION IN WHICH THE EXISTING TURF GRASS IS DEAD OR DORMANT DUE TO
18 INSUFFICIENT WATERING, the unit owner shall be allowed a reasonable and
19 practical opportunity, as defined by the association's executive board,
20 with consideration of applicable local growing seasons or practical
21 limitations, to reseed and revive turf grass before being required to
22 replace it with new sod.

23 **SECTION 2.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 38-33.3-103, **add**
24 (33) as follows:

25 **38-33.3-103. Definitions.** As used in the declaration and bylaws
26 of an association, unless specifically provided otherwise or unless the
27 context otherwise requires, and in this article:

1 (33) "XERISCAPE" MEANS THE APPLICATION OF THE PRINCIPLES OF
2 LANDSCAPE PLANNING AND DESIGN, SOIL ANALYSIS AND IMPROVEMENT,
3 APPROPRIATE PLANT SELECTION, LIMITATION OF TURF AREA, USE OF
4 MULCHES, IRRIGATION EFFICIENCY, AND APPROPRIATE MAINTENANCE
5 THAT RESULTS IN WATER USE EFFICIENCY AND WATER-SAVING PRACTICES.

6 **SECTION 3.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 38-33.3-106.5, **add**
7 (1) (i) as follows:

8 **38-33.3-106.5. Prohibitions contrary to public policy -**
9 **patriotic and political expression - emergency vehicles - fire**
10 **prevention - renewable energy generation devices - affordable**
11 **housing - drought prevention measures - definitions.**

12 (1) Notwithstanding any provision in the declaration, bylaws, or rules
13 and regulations of the association to the contrary, an association shall not
14 prohibit any of the following:

15 (i) THE USE OF XERISCAPE OR DROUGHT-TOLERANT VEGETATIVE
16 LANDSCAPES TO PROVIDE GROUND COVERING TO PROPERTY OWNED BY
17 THE UNIT OWNER. ASSOCIATIONS MAY ADOPT AND ENFORCE DESIGN OR
18 AESTHETIC GUIDELINES OR RULES THAT REQUIRE DROUGHT-TOLERANT
19 VEGETATIVE LANDSCAPES OR REGULATE THE TYPE, NUMBER, AND
20 PLACEMENT OF DROUGHT-TOLERANT PLANTINGS AND HARDSCAPES THAT
21 MAY BE INSTALLED ON THE UNIT OWNER'S PROPERTY OR PROPERTY FOR
22 WHICH THE UNIT OWNER IS RESPONSIBLE.

23 **SECTION 4.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 38-33.3-302, **amend**
24 (1) (k) as follows:

25 **38-33.3-302. Powers of unit owners' association.** (1) Except as
26 provided in subsections (2) and (3) of this section, and subject to the
27 provisions of the declaration, the association, without specific

1 authorization in the declaration, may:

2 (k) (I) Impose charges for late payment of assessments, recover
3 reasonable attorney fees and other legal costs for collection of
4 assessments and other actions to enforce the power of the association,
5 regardless of whether or not suit was initiated, and, after notice and an
6 opportunity to be heard, levy reasonable fines for violations of the
7 declaration, bylaws, and rules and regulations of the association.

8 (II) THE ASSOCIATION MAY NOT LEVY FINES AGAINST A UNIT
9 OWNER FOR VIOLATIONS OF DECLARATIONS, BYLAWS, OR RULES OF THE
10 ASSOCIATION FOR FAILURE TO ADEQUATELY WATER LANDSCAPES OR
11 VEGETATION FOR WHICH THE UNIT OWNER IS RESPONSIBLE WHEN WATER
12 RESTRICTIONS OR GUIDELINES FROM THE LOCAL WATER DISTRICT OR
13 SIMILAR ENTITY ARE IN PLACE AND THE UNIT OWNER IS WATERING IN
14 COMPLIANCE WITH SUCH RESTRICTIONS OR GUIDELINES. THE ASSOCIATION
15 MAY REQUIRE PROOF FROM THE UNIT OWNER THAT THE UNIT OWNER IS
16 WATERING THE LANDSCAPE OR VEGETATION IN A MANNER THAT IS
17 CONSISTENT WITH THE MAXIMUM WATERING PERMITTED BY THE
18 RESTRICTIONS OR GUIDELINES THEN IN EFFECT.

19 **SECTION 5. Safety clause.** The general assembly hereby finds,
20 determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate
21 preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.