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## HomeAdvisor study confirms advocate study critical of CAI surveys

### The CAI “satisfaction” studies

For years (since 2005) the public in general, the media, and state legislators have been targets of CAI’s “satisfaction” surveys sponsored by its affiliate, The Foundation for Community Associations Research.<sup>1</sup> Its stated mission reveals an internal bias favoring the CAI special agenda:

*“The Foundation supports Community Associations Institute (CAI), a national organization dedicated to fostering vibrant, competent, harmonious community associations. For more than 40 years, CAI has been the leader in providing education and resources to the volunteer homeowners who govern community associations and the professionals who support them.*

*“The Foundation for Community Association Research provides authoritative research and analysis on community association trends, issues, and operations. Our mission is to foster successful and sustainable communities.”*

This statement implies professional and objective research and studies. However, it misrepresents CAI by failing to inform its viewers that CAI is a business trade nonprofit whose purpose is to support the interests of its members, mainly attorneys and managers. Why would HOA “volunteers,” basically board members whose dues are paid by the HOA, become a CAI member whose purpose conflicts with the volunteer’s HOA, CAI’s customers?

### The HomeAdvisor Study

A study was conducted by HomeAdvisor this past September in an effort to uncover the attitudes of US HOA members across the country regarding life in an HOA.<sup>2</sup> The study “surveyed 1,006 homeowners on July 12, 2022. The gender breakdown was 50%

*man, 49% woman and 1% nonbinary. The age breakdown was 16% baby boomers, 28% Gen X, 50% millennials, and 5% Gen Z.”<sup>3</sup>*

Note that for the rising appeal of large-scale active-adult communities that function as a 365-day timeshare resort, only 16% plus a few years of Generation X — 1967 being the 55 age cut off for 2022 — apply. However, as your board attempts to remain *in vogue*, the attitudes of the Generation X and Millennials will apply. That’s some 78% influence and rising.

Its Key Findings include: 1) Of homeowners surveyed, 1 in 3 say an HOA has caused them regular stress, 2) A majority of homeowners (4 in 5) would rather live in a neighborhood without an HOA, 3) The HOA restrictions homeowners hate the most? Lawn decor rules, 4) Homeowners’ chief complaint about HOAs is the invasive behavior of HOA board members and neighbors, and 5) Homeowners put restrictive policies and rules at the top of their list—84% say these policies are a downside of HOA membership.”

This result from an independent entity is not surprising to many who live in HOAs and are not cult followers that “the board can do no wrong.” Its results stand in stark contrast to the CAI affiliate studies.

### **Homeowner Advocate studies of 2015**

Two homeowner rights advocates, Sara Benson (Chicago) and Jill Schweitzer (Phoenix), were responsible for 2 online polls on homeowner satisfaction with HOAs. In stark contrast, not surprisingly, the **Combined Advocate Surveys**, as I refer to them, revealed opinions and views refuting the results of the CAI “happiness” surveys. It appears that the CAI studies were happiness studies of happy HOA members.<sup>4</sup>

Under the trade name, *George Analytics*, a proprietary investigation, and analysis of the 3 surveys was conducted and standard statistical T Tests for validity were applied. Some observations: both the CAI and Combined surveys were internet polls (CAI included telephone calling) consisted of a reported 800 responses. CAI’s questions were more generalized and less detailed than the enquiring questions in the Combined surveys, which, naturally, provided more insights into HOA issues and controversies.<sup>5</sup>

I concluded that

- In statistical terms, the *George Analytics* shows that the CAI and Combined responses (average percentages) come from 2 distinct samples, segments, of the HOA population at a 99.5% significance level.
- Overall, in terms of HOA favorable/unfavorable, CAI showed 59%/ 15% and the Combined studies showed 8%/79% ratios.
- The Combined Advocate Surveys demonstrate that the CAI surveys are not representative of all HOA members.

- The lauded CAI surveys do not represent the complete population of HOA members as claimed by CAI, and these surveys cannot be promoted as representing reality within HOA-Land.

Seven years later the HomeAdvisors study confirms the weakness and bias of the CAI - Foundations satisfaction surveys.

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> [About Us - Foundation for Community Association Research \(caionline.org\)](http://caionline.org).

<sup>2</sup> View the full report, [“Study: Homeowners Think HOAs Aren't Worth the Stress,”](#) Home Advisor. (HomeAdvisor is a multimillion-dollar international digital marketplace. It connects homeowners with local service professionals to carry out home improvement, maintenance, and remodeling projects.)

<sup>3</sup> [Baby Boomers—born 1946 to 1964; Generation X—born 1965 to 1980; Millennials—born 1981 to 2000; Generation Z—born 2001 to 2020].

<sup>4</sup> See my review, [Combined Advocate Surveys vs. CAI surveys – HOA Constitutional Government \(wordpress.com\)](#).

<sup>5</sup> [HOA Surveys Comparison](#), George K. Staropoli (2016).