

Briefly...

■ Tennessee Law

Working with the state self storage associations, the SSA has now championed three successful industry lien modernization bills thus far in 2011, with the latest signed in May by Tennessee's Governor Bill Haslam. Arkansas and Colorado were the first to improve their lien statutes this year, with several more working their way through various legislatures. See page 42.

■ SSAF Scholarships

May 1 was the deadline for this year's Self Storage Association Foundation Scholarship applications. The committee is currently working through the many applications that they received for the fall 2011 semester. Last year seven deserving awardees who work within, or have a relative who works within, the industry, received grants to help with their education. See page 46.

■ Virtual SSA

Be sure to keep up with the SSA via our online presence. In addition to the SSA website (www.selfstorage.org), follow us on Twitter at [SelfStorageAssn](https://twitter.com/SelfStorageAssn) and become a fan of the Self Storage Association on Facebook. You can also check out past issues of the *SSA Globe* magazine at www.ssaglobe.org.



SSA Poll Demonstrates Industry's Concerns with Government Interference

Tim Dietz – SSA Sr. VP, Communications & Government Relations

During a general session of the SSA Spring Conference & Trade Show in Charlotte in April, SSA President & CEO Mike Scanlon released data gathered by the SSA that demonstrated the industry's concerns over sales taxes and its thirst for more cost effective lien processes. The information resulted from a survey conducted by a independent Richmond, Virginia-based political analysis firm, which sampled self storage owner/operators nationwide, and will be used by the Association to focus resources towards areas of greatest concern for the industry.

"We asked about a number of areas, such as market saturation, occupancy trends and availability of financing," Scanlon told the crowd of more than 900 self storage industry professionals. "What we learned is that the areas that concerned self storage operators the most were those things that they could not directly control—generally situations dictated by government regulations."

The most critical area identified in the polling was a concerted effort to oppose sales taxes on self storage rents. Almost 70 percent of respondents noted this as a very important area on which the Association should focus. This concern was substantiated during this legislative season when at least four states introduced measures that targeted the industry, among others, to help alleviate budget shortfalls: Illinois, Michigan, North Carolina and Rhode Island. The SSA has been working with state self storage associations to battle the plans. None of the measures had become law as of May.

"We oppose these unfair taxes wherever they pop up," said Scanlon. "There are just so many that we really need the local operators to get involved. Lawmakers need to understand that these levies are passed along to the most vulnerable members of their communities, not the businesses."

Close behind the sales taxes, survey respondents noted the "elimination of costly lien sale procedures in state self storage laws" as an important priority.

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Of those who responded, 65.9 percent asked that the Association continue its efforts to modernize these statutorily required lien provisions, most of which were instituted 20 or 30 years ago. Since 2008, the SSA has worked with state self storage associations in Arizona, California, Michigan, North Carolina, Utah, Washington State and Wisconsin to improve these laws. This year alone, Arkansas and Colorado lien improvement laws have been signed, with seven more bills now working their way through their respective legislatures.

Other areas identified as important for the Association to focus on included growing occupancy (65.5 percent), improving industry saturation (54 percent), finding affordable health insurance for employees (51.3 percent), keeping websites fresh (49.6 percent), finding good employees (48 percent), social networking access (45.7 percent) and securing loans for refinancing (34 percent).

The SSA conducts occasional surveys to gauge trends and concerns from the entire self storage industry, not just from SSA members. This data, and other information from this most recent poll, are included in the SSA *Globe's* Data Depot section. The 300 operator sample has a margin of error ± 5.77 percent. ❖

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