

## **2016 REALTOR® Accomplishments & Continued Advocacy:**

### **• National**

- **Housing Opportunity through Modernization Act** — NAR strongly backed bipartisan legislation that changed how certain allowances for low-income families—such as child care and medical expenses—are used to determine federal housing assistance. Under the Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act (H.R. 3700), the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is now required to change certain aspects of its rental assistance programs by altering calculations of tenant income and rent, and making households that exceed new income and asset limits ineligible for assistance.
- **Unmanned Aerial Vehicles** — NAR continued to work with the Federal Aviation Association (FAA) on how real estate professionals can use UAVs (also called drones) safely to photograph properties to market for sale. Thanks to NAR's efforts, aerial drone photography is now permitted across the country.
- **Mortgage Debt Cancellation Relief** — NAR continues to lobby for mortgage debt cancellation relief. This tax extender bill currently expires at the end of 2016, and extending this act, including real estate provisions for mortgage-debt forgiveness, is a priority for NAR in the new presidential administration.
- **Terrorism Risk Insurance Act (TRIA)** — NAR advocated for the passage of the terrorism risk insurance through a federal backstop program that is a critical component of the private/public partnership created to protect the nation's business sector. This act has been passed through 2020.

### **• State**

- **Realty Transfer Tax Reallocation** — PAR continues to diligently watch any proposed increases to the RTT, including any proposals that would set current realty transfer tax collections as a baseline or to use the money collected from the RTT to be earmarked for special purposes.
- **2016 Election** — In the 2016 General Election, GHAR recommended state RPAC support to several candidates, including incumbents Rep. Greg Rothman, R-87, and Rep. Sue Helm, R-104, both REALTORS®, as well as Rep. Steve Bloom, R-199 and Rep. Sheryl DeLozier, R-87.
- **1031 Like-Kind Exchanges** — In June 2016, PAR held its first-ever Commercial Day on the Hill in support of HB 700, introduced by Rep. Steve Bloom, R-199, which would amend the Pennsylvania tax code to treat 1031 Like-Kind Exchanges as they are treated at the federal level. This bill did not pass, but will continue to be a legislative priority for PAR.
- **Municipal Use and Occupancy Permits** — In September, PAR issued a Call-to-Action on HB 1437, which included language amending Act 99 of 2000, which dealt with municipalities' ability to issue use and occupancy permits. PAR found that municipalities were withholding the permits, and delaying or in some cases preventing the transfer of properties, over issues that were not a threat to health and safety and should have been part of the negotiating process for the buyer and seller. The bill was signed into law as Act 133 in November.

### **• Local**

- **Cumberland County and Dauphin County Comprehensive Plans** — GHAR has been invited to participate in both the Cumberland County and Dauphin County comprehensive plan reviews. In Cumberland County, GHAR has secured a \$5,000 NAR Smart Growth grant to help conduct a survey regarding future needs of the county. In Dauphin County, GHAR has been invited to sit on the steering committee for the comprehensive plan. In both cases, GHAR is a voice at the table as these counties develop plans for growth and development for the next decade.
- **HUD Fair Housing Changes** — In April, HUD issued new guidelines on the use of criminal background checks in determining housing eligibility. GHAR has received two grants to work with local municipalities and stakeholder agencies to better understand and utilize these changes.

**All this could not have been possible without the strong backing of RPAC!**

**Please invest in your business by making your 2017 RPAC investment today!**

“Contributions are not deductible for income tax purposes. Contributions to RPAC are voluntary and are used for political purposes. The amount suggested is merely a guideline and you may contribute more or less than the suggested amount. You may refuse to contribute without reprisal and the National Association of REALTORS® or any of its state associations or local boards will not favor or disfavor any member because of the amount contributed. 70% of each contribution is used by your state PAC to support state and local political candidates. Until your state PAC reaches its RPAC goal 30% is sent to National RPAC to support federal candidates and is charged against your limits under 2 U.S.C. 441a; after the state PAC reaches its RPAC goal it may elect to retain your entire contribution for use in supporting state and local candidates.”

## **RPAC Quick Facts:**



### **What is a political action committee (PAC):**

A PAC is a group of individuals that organize together to promote its political interests by raising money to make contributions to political candidates. In many cases, PACs are associated with other organizations (labor unions, corporations, trade associations, etc.). PACs are influential and valuable because they allow individuals to pull their resources together and make larger contributions to candidates. Therefore, the impact and influence of those larger contributions (through PAC contributions) is greater than one individual contribution alone.

### **What is RPAC and how does it work:**

RPAC stands for the REALTORS® Political Action Committee. RPAC was created as a PAC associated with the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR). However, the Pennsylvania Association of REALTORS® (PAR) also has its own state-RPAC that is strictly a Pennsylvania PAC (only allowed to make contributions to state, county and municipal level candidates).

Under agreements between the Greater Harrisburg Association of REALTORS® (GHAR), PAR and NAR, fundraising for RPAC is conducted at the local level. Local GHAR members make contributions that are transferred to the state RPAC. Of all the contributions collected by PAR, 30% are transferred to the national RPAC to be used to make contributions to national Senators and Congressmen. The remaining 70% of contributions stays within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for PAR's RPAC to use to make contributions to state legislative, county level, and municipal level candidates. Because GHAR has created its own local PAC (GHAR-PAC), PAR returns certain percentages of all GHAR member's contributions to our local Association to use to make contributions to county and municipal level candidates. GHAR had to create its own local PAC in order to receive these funds from PAR.

Under the current agreement, PAR will return 20% of all contributions until GHAR makes its "Fair Share" goal. After GHAR makes its yearly goal, PAR will return 50% of contributions above the goal amount.

### **What are the advantages of RPAC to a REALTOR®:**

- **Increases your political impact** - RPAC significantly increases the impact of your personal political dollars in a candidate's campaign because you pull your contribution with the thousands of other REALTORS®.
- **Sends a message** - When your contribution is made through RPAC, candidates cannot misunderstand the issues that are important to you and your profession.
- **Gives you a national impact** - Many citizens believe they should support and try to influence just their own lawmakers. Yet, in the House of Representatives, there are 434 other members whose votes count on your issues just as much as the one vote cast by your own representative. You can have a greater impact on the issues you care about, and can expand your influence beyond your own congressional district, by joining RPAC.
- **Enhances political leadership** - RPAC serves as a stimulus to get you more actively involved in the process of government: people who contribute to RPAC are more likely to vote intelligently; they are more likely to write to their elected officials and express an opinion on an issue; and they are more likely to personally contribute or volunteer to work in a candidate's campaign.

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