

NAR Announces Political Survival Initiative

The National Association of Realtors® (NAR) has introduced a new program dedicated to increasing the association's political advocacy.

The Realtor® Party Political Survival Initiative is designed to increase NAR's political advocacy. To fund this initiative, NAR is proposing to raise dues by \$40 beginning in 2012. A majority of the dollars raised through this dues increase will be returned back to states to be used in support of state and local candidates, issue campaigns and for other political advocacy needs.

The Political Survival Initiative -- prompted in part by last year's U.S. Supreme Court decision which strikes down restrictions on independent campaign expenditures by corporations. The decision not only changed the way elections are financed at the national level, but also overturned rulings in 23 states that only allowed "hard dollars" specifically allocated for political purposes to be used in political campaigns.

The ability to use corporate funds and member dues to fund independent expenditure campaigns in federal, state and local campaigns "is a game changer of gigantic proportions," NAR said. "It is as if the goal posts on a 100-yard football field were expanded to now cover 140 yards."

NAR can continue to contribute to election campaigns through RPAC contributions but in order for Realtors® to compete in this new political environment, NAR believes it is necessary to raise dues dollars to keep the Realtor® organization as one of the most influential advocacy groups in America.

In 2010, top advocacy issues for NAR included preserving the mortgage interest deduction and capital gains exclusions for homeowners; preserving Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac's ability to provide liquidity to mortgage markets; maintaining homebuyers' ability to obtain Federal Housing Administration-insured loans; and improving the short-sale process.

With this proposed dues increase, more than 50 percent of NAR's budget would be devoted to political advocacy, which consistently ranks among members as the #1 benefit they receive from NAR.

The NAR Board of Directors will vote on this dues increase at the Mid-Year Meetings, May 9-14, in Washington, D.C.