

The REALTOR® Party Political Survival Initiative: What Members Should Know

Why did NAR create the REALTOR® Party Political Survival Initiative?

- In January of 2010, the Supreme Court ruled in the case of Citizens United vs. the Federal Election Commission.
 - The ruling states that corporate dollars—so-called soft dollars—can be used to fund independent expenditure campaigns.

- This not only changes the way elections are financed at the national level, but it also overturns restrictions that allowed only hard dollars—those funds contributed for political purposes by individuals, rather than corporations—to be used in 23 states.
 - This means political fundraising as we have known it for the past 100 years just shifted dramatically.
 - Corporate funds/dues can now be used to shape opinions about candidates in ALL 50 states.

- It is a game changer of gigantic proportions.
 - It is as if the goal posts on a 100 yard football field were expanded to now cover 140 yards.

- In order for “The Voice for Real Estate” to have the impact it has had for the past 100 years in terms of political advocacy, the REALTOR® organization is stepping up its game.
 - No one has spoken with more power or as passionately about protecting private property rights and fighting for opening the door to the American Dream of Home Ownership than the REALTOR® Family.

- To maintain and grow our political power in this new landscape, NAR launched the REALTOR® Party Political Survival Initiative.
 - The REALTOR® Party Political Survival Initiative did not just happen overnight.
 - It was the result of nearly a year of careful study and consideration.

What does the REALTOR® Party Political Survival Initiative mean for members?

- The proposal is for a dedicated dues increase of \$40.00.
 - The increase would take effect in the 2012 budget year.
 - Because it is “dedicated” to this initiative, it would be used exclusively to fund political advocacy efforts.

- In the past, NAR has already contributed funds to this initiative out of its operating budget.
 - But to undertake the initiative at this level and give it a best chance for success, greater additional funding is needed.
 - The increased dollars will be dedicated solely to advocacy purposes as outlined by the Political Survival Initiative.
 - If this dues increase is approved, over 50% of NAR budget would be devoted to political advocacy, which consistently ranks among members as the #1 benefit they receive from NAR.

What are the benefits of the Political Survival Initiative?

- The most powerful benefit is it will keep the REALTOR® organization as one of the most influential advocacy groups in America.
 - There are monumental issues coming down the pike that will affect members in their daily businesses, such as the future of mortgage finance and keeping housing affordable in America.
 - We must have the power to shape this pivotal moment for the American Dream of Home Ownership.

- Most importantly, these dollars will be available to state associations and local boards.
 - 2/3rds of the dollars raised will be returned back to states to be used in support of local candidates and issue campaigns, and for other political advocacy needs—to help shape the opinions of candidates on real estate-related issues as they work their way up as elected leaders.
 - It will combine NAR funds with state/local funds to increase our political power
 - It will create early relationships with state and local lawmakers/policymakers
 - It will shape the political make-up of state or local governing bodies.

- NAR President Ron Phipps often comments that “now is our time.”
 - With this initiative, REALTORS[®] are seizing the moment for home ownership.
 - We are doing this NOT ONLY because of the Citizens United Supreme Court decision, but because our core competency is our grass roots advocacy; it’s where we need to be investing today so our future advocacy efforts will be successful tomorrow.
 - We need to be grooming our "REALTOR[®] Champions" at the state / local levels now, before some of them progress to become elected leaders at the federal level.

- The political press in Washington has already noted the emerging clout of the REALTOR[®] Party.
 - A recent article in Politico said: “REALTORS[®] ... are going to want to be politically effective, and a large measure of their influence is that they are present everywhere.”

- Now is our time to seize the day.

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