

From May 9 through May 14, REALTORS® from across the nation will descend on Washington, D.C. for the National Association of REALTORS® Midyear Legislative Meetings and Trade Expo. The Midyear Legislative Meetings represent an important opportunity for REALTORS® to meet with their U.S. Senators and Representatives to petition the Government for a redress of grievances. REALTORS® accomplish this by communicating the issues critical to their businesses, communities and the consumers they represent.

As REALTORS® meet with Members of Congress, they will advocate for important policy issues:

Affordable and Available Property Insurance: Since September 2008, Congress has approved nine National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) extensions and allowed five lapses. During the June 2010 lapse, 47,000 home sales were delayed or cancelled. NAR urges Congress to reauthorize the NFIP for at least five years and end the uncertainty of extensions and shutdowns.

The Future of the Secondary Mortgage Market: The GSEs, though they have been in conservatorship for almost 3 years, remain critical to ensuring mortgage market liquidity. Elimination of the GSEs, without a viable replacement for their secondary mortgage market mission, will mean severely restricted mortgage capital and higher costs for qualified, creditworthy borrowers. NAR urges Congress to enact comprehensive legislation to restructure the secondary mortgage market in a manner that provides the federal government with a continued role to ensure a continual flow of mortgage liquidity in all markets under all economic conditions.

Access to Affordable Mortgage Products: Purchasing a home requires a significant cash investment from buyers including the downpayment, closing costs and other fees such as inspections. Requiring a higher downpayment does little to reduce risk of default, but can strip homebuyers of their savings and increases the number of borrowers who would be ineligible. NAR opposes mandatory increases in mortgage downpayments as proposed by financial regulators. NAR also urges Congress to extend the current mortgage loan limits for FHA and GSEs.

Preserving Home Ownership Tax Benefits: In December, 2010, the President's National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform (best known as the Deficit Commission) issued a report identifying tax and spending changes designed to significantly reduce the deficit over the next decade. That Commission recommended different tax options including elimination of the MID for second homes and reducing the amount of allowable mortgage debt from \$1 million to \$500,000. Any changes to the tax rules that apply to homeownership would disrupt the market and cause home values to further decline. NAR urges preservation of the tax rules that apply to homeownership.