

About RPAC



What is RPAC / Cincinnati RPAC?

The Cincinnati Area Board of REALTORS® Political Action Committee (Cincinnati RPAC) and the REALTORS® Political Action Committee (RPAC) are non-profit, non-partisan organizations whose purpose is to provide financial assistance to the election campaigns of qualified candidates.

The PACs receive voluntary contributions from REALTORS® and others interested in the rights of private property ownership. The record, program and quality of a candidate determines who gets RPAC support. Cincinnati RPAC supports local elected officials while OAR and NAR RPAC contribute to candidates for state and federal office, respectively.

Does RPAC money buy the votes of politicians?

Buy votes? No! RPAC contributes to candidates who are knowledgeable, fair-minded and understand the importance of private property rights. It helps to ensure that our elected officials understand the business of real estate and the importance of enacting laws that allow REALTORS® to conduct business successfully.

I already pay Association dues, isn't that enough?

Federal law and most state laws prohibit the use of dues money for campaign contributions to candidates, so additional funds must be raised for this. RPAC gives you the opportunity to have local, state and nationwide impact on the election of officials who shape real estate legislation.

Where does RPAC money go?

Through a cooperative agreement, 50% of your RPAC contributions are sent to OAR and NAR for support of state and federal candidates and for issues advocacy. The other 50% of your RPAC contribution stays with Cincinnati RPAC, which is administered locally by the Cincinnati RPAC Board of Trustees.

The Cincinnati RPAC Trustees decide which local candidates and issues receive Cincinnati RPAC support. Cincinnati RPAC typically achieves an 80-90% success rate in selecting winning candidates and issues.

RPAC is your best investment in real estate. Please participate in the voluntary dues contribution program to help ensure that your REALTOR® Associations maintain their status as the 'Voice for Real Estate®' at local governments, the Ohio Statehouse and Congress.

Which political party does RPAC support?

Both! When you contribute to RPAC, your money is invested in the most bi-partisan, association PAC in the country. Taking into consideration party contributions in the last several election cycles, RPAC has contributed to Republicans and Democrats in essentially a 50-50 split.

To make a contribution or to learn more about Cincinnati RPAC and RPAC overall, please contact **Mark Quarry, CABR Director of Government Affairs, at 513-842-3014** or mquarry@cabr.org.

What are some examples of what is or isn't law because of RPAC?

→ **Banks in Real Estate** — After eight years of continuous struggle to convince Congress that real estate is not financial in nature and banks should not be allowed in the real estate brokerage business, NAR achieved its objective. On March 11, 2010 the Omnibus Appropriations Bill, H.R. 1105, was signed into law, and with it a declaration that, going forward, neither real estate brokerage nor real estate management can be classified as a financial activity and, accordingly, banks can't be in the real estate brokerage business.

→ **Short Sales** — After many months of advocating by NAR, in 2009 the Treasury Department finally released the guidelines and forms for its new Home Affordable Foreclosure Alternatives Program (HAFA), which is part of the Home Affordable Modification Program (HAMP). HAFA provides incentives in connection with a short sale or a deed-in-lieu of foreclosure (DIL) used to avoid foreclosure on a loan eligible for modification under the HAMP program. Program features include pre-approving sales terms before listing the property, releasing borrowers from future liability for the unpaid amount of the first mortgage, and imposing deadlines at each stage.

→ **First-time Homebuyer Tax Credit** — On November 6, 2009, President Obama signed legislation that extended and expanded the homebuyer tax credit. NAR was the leading advocate for the extension and expansion of the home buyer tax credit as an important incentive to help stabilize the housing market and stimulate the economy. REALTORS® sent more than 550,000 letters to members of Congress and Senators.

→ **FHA and GSE Loan Limits** — On September 30, 2010, Congress passed legislation to extend the current loan limits for FHA, Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae through September 30, 2011. This extension was the third time in 2009 that NAR successfully advocated to retain limits of 125% of median home price (at 2007 levels), capped at \$729,750 in high-cost parts of the country.

→ **Protecting the Mortgage Interest Deduction** — The Administration's proposed Fiscal Year 2010 budget included a recommendation that health insurance reform be "paid for" by limiting the value of the mortgage interest deduction (MID) and other itemized deductions for upper income taxpayers. The Administration proposed limiting the value of the deductions to 28% for all taxpayers paying more than 28%. Accordingly, those in the 33% and 35% brackets would receive less value for their deductions. NAR aggressively fought off changes to the MID through grassroots, advertising and similar advocacy tools. To date, no version of health reform has included any provision that would limit the MID.

→ **Insurance Surplus Lines** — In 2009, the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 2571, the Non-admitted and Reinsurance Reform Act, a bill that seeks to modernize the insurance regulatory system by providing a uniform approach to regulating the commercial surplus lines market. More than 25% of commercial insurance in the United States is placed in the surplus lines market, also known as the non-admitted insurance marketplace. This legislation is a key component in overhauling insurance regulation and will help ensure the availability of non-admitted and surplus lines of coverage in areas of the country where admitted property and casualty coverage has grown costly and may even be unavailable.

→ **Term Asset-Backed Securities Loan Facility** — The "Financial Stability Plan" announced in early 2009 by Treasury Secretary Geithner included a major expansion of the Term Asset-Backed Securities Loan Facility (TALF) program to include commercial mortgage-backed securities (CMBS). To further ensure the stability and recovery of the commercial credit markets, NAR was successful in advocating for the extension of TALF loans from three years to five years, as well as having the TALF program extended through 2010.

→ **Flood Insurance** — In September 2010, NAR successfully worked with Congress to extend authority for the National Flood Insurance Program while Congress continues to consider important reforms to improve the program's long-term viability. Without this program, property owners in thousands of communities across the U.S. would not be able to obtain the insurance necessary for them to obtain a mortgage in federal designated floodplains.

→ **Energy Efficiency Incentives** — In 2009, NAR eliminated time-of-sale energy efficiency requirements from H.R. 2454, the American Clean Energy and Security Act, before passing the House of Representatives. Those provisions would have prescribed

energy audits and recording, public disclosure and MLS listing. NAR also succeeded in exempting existing residential and commercial buildings from state building labeling programs in the bill. The House bill also includes additional funding and guidelines for state governments to offer financial and other incentives to property owners who voluntarily improve the energy efficiency of homes. NAR is working to retain those exclusions as the Senate considers the House-passed legislation.

→ **Compliance Guides / Toolkits** — Throughout 2009, NAR developed materials to help REALTORS® navigate regulatory issues and new rules that arose during the year:

- An online compliance guide was created for EPA's new [Lead Paint Renovation, Repair and Painting Rule](#)
- [VA Toolkit: Home Loan Guaranty Services](#) was created to help veteran clients gain a better understanding of the many advantages the VA loan program has over conventional mortgages.
- NAR worked with FEMA to create [two flyers](#) — one for REALTORS® and one for homebuyers — that talks about flood risk and flood insurance.

Additional RPAC Information

Since 1969, RPAC has been promoting the election of pro-REALTOR® candidates across the United States. During the 2010 federal election cycle alone, RPAC contributed over \$12 million to pro-REALTOR® candidates to Congress, making NAR RPAC the # 1 trade association political action committee in the nation.

RPAC is the only political group in the country organized for REALTORS®, run by REALTORS® and exists solely to further issues important to REALTORS®. Your RPAC contribution is an investment – one of the best investments you can make for your business and yourself. RPAC is your best insurance against poorly-designed small business and commercial real estate legislation. If you're not giving your "fair share" to RPAC, you're not doing all you can to better your profession, your business and yourself.

Are contributions to RPAC tax deductible?

No. Contributions used for political purposes are not tax deductible on your federal income taxes.

What criteria do the NAR RPAC Trustees use when making their contribution decisions for federal candidates?

It is the policy of RPAC to primarily support incumbents who have been supportive of NAR. In order to gauge the deserved level of support, the following criteria is used to build a candidate profile of incumbents to evaluate support. The criteria include:

- Individual action taken to advance NAR legislation (speeches, letters, hearings, etc)
- Congressional Voting Record and analyses of incumbent members of Congress
- Co-sponsorship of NAR legislation
- Congressional Leadership Position
- Congressional Committee Assignments
- Recommendations from State RPAC Trustees
- Campaign intelligence reports provided by the NAR political and legislative staff
- DC Accessibility
- Instate Accessibility

RPAC is one of the most bi-partisan PACs in the country, giving to both Democrats and Republicans alike. The only stipulation is that the candidate be a “member” of the **REALTOR Party®**, that is, members of Congress and candidates who support REALTOR®-friendly issues. Through direct contributions, our opportunity race program, and independent expenditure, we ensure that REALTOR® issues are heard on Capitol Hill.