

**Pending Approval by the Executive Committee
on October 18, 2023**

RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FROM:

Executive Committee

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the proposed changes to the 2024-2025 Legislative Program Policy Positions

BACKGROUND:

The proposed changes made to the Arizona REALTORS® 2024-2025 Legislative Program Policy Positions were formulated at the annual REALTOR® Caucus. The Caucus is an opportunity for REALTOR® members to confer and bring forth issues that have the potential to impact the industry on a statewide basis.

The Legislative and Political Affairs Committee reviews member input from the Caucus and approves the changes and additions to the policy positions, which will dictate the association's legislative agenda for 2024-2025.

On September 8th, the proposed 2024-2025 Legislative Program Positions was approved by a unanimous vote of the Legislative and Political Affairs Committee. The approved positions included changes under the 2023 -2024 Legislative Program Policy Positions; most notably surrounding the efforts of deed fraud, home insurance pertaining to natural disasters, joint ventures, and removing advocacy for residential rental TPT and formation of a housing study committee as those were completed.

SEE ATTACHMENTS TITLED: 2024-2025 LEGISLATIVE POLICIES

BUDGET IMPACT:

None

MOTION:

TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE 2024-2025 LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM POLICY POSITIONS.

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ARIZONA REALTORS®
REALTORS® 2024-2025 LEGISLATIVE POLICIES

AS APPROVED ON

OCTOBER 2023



As approved

INTRODUCTION

As part of its ongoing legislative policy development process, Arizona REALTORS® seeks input from all aspects of the real estate industry at the earliest possible time when formulating or reviewing legislation affecting the industry. Arizona REALTORS® also, through its overall lobbying process, continually reviews the rules and regulations proposed by state agencies affecting the real estate industry. The principles and policy statements on the following pages are intended to give direction to Arizona REALTORS® overall legislative effort.

Arizona REALTORS® Legislative Policy Statement Development

The policy statements are divided into three priority categories. Those categories are described as follows:

1. **Basic Principles:** These principles are very unlikely to change from year-to-year. They include such issues as cooperation with governmental agencies, private property rights protections, fair housing principles and others.
2. **Ongoing Policy Statements:** These statements describe those positions that Arizona REALTORS® would take in the event Arizona REALTORS® or another entity proposes legislation during the session that has not been identified as expected legislation for the upcoming session. This category contains the bulk of the policy statements and provides Arizona REALTORS® lobbyists with a quick response to Arizona REALTORS® position on many issues if the need should arise.
3. **Upcoming Legislative Session(s) Program:** This category contains those specific issues that Arizona REALTORS® expects to introduce or strongly support as part of a coalition in the next two years. It also includes expected legislation that Arizona REALTORS® intends to strongly oppose.

As approved

BASIC PRINCIPLES

These principles are very unlikely to change from year-to-year. They include such issues as cooperation with governmental agencies, private property rights protections, fair housing principles, and others. The following principles are the foundation of the Arizona REALTORS® positions regarding governmental and legislative action.

1. Property owners' water and property rights must be protected.
2. All people must have fair and equal availability of housing without regard to race, religion, color, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin.
3. Educate and create awareness with REALTORS® and the public in regard to housing needs, programs and opportunities.
4. Solid waste management and recycling efforts must be efficient and ecologically sound.
5. Prevention of hazardous waste problems and identification and cleanup of existing hazardous waste sites must be adequately funded.
6. Government must have a common-sense approach to environmentally sensitive issues with due consideration to private property rights.
7. Real estate licensees must have protection against unreasonable duties of inspection and disclosure outside the scope of their real estate licensure.
8. The regulatory and rule-making processes should be streamlined and simplified to the regulated industry.
9. The interpretation and enforcement of statutes and rules affecting property owners and their rights must be consistent throughout Arizona.
10. The interpretation and enforcement of statutes and rules affecting licensees and their obligations must be consistent throughout Arizona.
11. Arizona REALTORS® should maintain a liaison relationship with state agencies and all branches of government so that:
 - a. Information flows freely between those agencies and Arizona REALTORS®.
 - b. Arizona REALTORS® may assist those agencies in addressing matters related to Arizona REALTORS® members and private property rights.
 - c. Arizona REALTORS® may provide the industry's viewpoint on matters under consideration by those agencies.
12. Good communication should be maintained between state agencies regarding matters impacting real estate consumers.
13. State agencies affecting the real estate industry must have adequate funding and staffing.
14. State agencies affecting the real estate industry must practice good financial management and fiscal accountability.
15. There should be greater cooperation between federal, state, and local authorities to benefit the public regarding regulation and disclosure of matters affecting real property.
16. Oppose unfunded mandates to prevent further tax burdens at the local level.
17. Oppose any public takings or devaluation of private property rights by body of government unless through formal condemnation proceedings and the provision of just compensation.
18. Seek governmental accountability through legislative review of the overall budget.

As approved

Arizona REALTORS® Government Affairs...the most respected, influential political entity in Arizona.

ONGOING POSITION STATEMENTS

These statements describe those positions that Arizona REALTORS® would take in the event that Arizona REALTORS® or another entity proposes governmental action or legislation, and which have not been identified as expected governmental action or legislation for the upcoming session. This category contains the bulk of the policy statements and provides Arizona REALTORS® lobbyists with a quick response to Arizona REALTORS® position on many issues if the need should arise. If legislation or regulation were proposed on the following topics, Arizona REALTORS® position would be to:

Real Estate Regulation

1. The Arizona Department of Real Estate should be adequately funded by the Legislature.
2. Support an increase in fees, if necessary, to support adequate ADRE funding.
3. Support efforts to enhance the Arizona Department of Real Estate's Advisory Board's role in the accomplishment of the Department's mission.
4. Oppose attempts to repeal or reduce continuing education requirements and support an increase in the quality of continuing education requirements and the quality of instructors.
5. Favor efforts to increase minimum instructor standards and other assurances of quality real estate education.
6. Support the addition of a three-hour mandatory ethics class for license renewal.
7. Oppose efforts to reduce or eliminate licensure requirements or fee waivers that negatively impact REALTORS®.
8. Support legislation further clarifying marketing efforts of real estate licensees.
9. Support legislation that further protects sellers and buyers from predatory wholesalers.
10. Support legislation that would allow brokers and real estate school to hold virtual offices
11. Support legislation that would allow instructors to earn credit for classes taught.

The Environment

12. Favor current and other appropriate standards to reduce atmospheric pollution.
13. Favor the balancing of environmental concerns with those of business and private property owners of Arizona properties.
14. Favor economical but effective standardized environmental property assessments.
15. Oppose any change to regulations that limit pest control reports to wood infestation items only.
16. Support policies or legislation addressing forest management practices that prevent and minimize catastrophic forest fires, infestation, and clean up.
17. Support water policy that considers homeowners and available long-term water supply.
18. Monitor and engage in the ADEQ Rules process, specifically as it relates to the Notice of Transfer Program.

Financing

19. Oppose any effort that would allow banks, and savings and loans to expand into real estate brokerage business.
20. Support laws that would protect property owners against deficiency judgments.
21. Support the procedure of lender selection of appraisers for FHA and VA loans.
22. Support legislation that would:
 - a. Require lenders to provide consumers with their specific credit score, the credit information used to compile the score, and an explanation of how credit scores work in the loan approval process
 - b. Compel reporting agencies to correct inaccurate information in a timely manner
 - c. Require lenders to use the FICO score as a tool together with other underwriting methods to ensure consistency, and not as a SOLE determinant in lending decisions.

As approved

23. Oppose abusive or predatory lending practices such as unsuitable loan terms and deceptive claims that can result in home equity stripping, diminished personal credit standing, or violations of federal or state consumer protection statutes and regulations.

Taxation

24. Oppose any proposed tax on any type of property transaction or any type of service not currently taxed or constitutionally protected by Prop 126.
25. Favor efforts to reduce reliance on real property taxes for capital finance of school construction, operation, and maintenance.
26. Favor continued deductibility, without limitation, on both federal and state personal income taxes of interest and property taxes on primary and secondary homes.
27. Favor elimination or reduction of state and federal capital gains and estate taxes.
28. Favor any efforts to improve passive loss benefits and their deductibility.
29. Favor increased payments in lieu of property tax on federal lands in Arizona in order to reimburse local governments for the loss of state and local property taxes.
30. Support efforts to repeal rental or lease tax on real property at any level of government.
31. Oppose any change that would diminish the value of tax-deferred exchanges.
32. No fee can be used for any purpose other than to offset the cost it was intended to cover.
33. Monitor proposed tax changes in accordance with existing legislative policy statements and prepare for a referendum, should it become necessary.
34. Favor reduction of the residential and commercial depreciation schedules, including reduction of the tenant improvement depreciation schedule.
35. Support simplification, improvements, and streamlining of the tax-deferred exchange process.
36. Arizona REALTORS® will oppose any effort to institute a real estate transfer tax and may support actions to prohibit such by law at the ballot or at the state legislature.
37. Arizona REALTORS® will oppose any effort to raise property taxes to purchase open space without the vote of the people.
38. Arizona REALTORS® will oppose any effort to institute a professional service tax or attempt to circumvent the constitutional protections made by Prop 126.
39. Protect the Mortgage Interest Deduction.

Property Transfers

40. Oppose any legislative efforts to mandate a property inspection as a prerequisite to transferring real estate.
41. Oppose any legislative efforts to mandate a home warranty as a prerequisite to transferring residential resale real estate.
42. Oppose any legislative efforts to mandate a survey as a prerequisite to transferring real estate.
43. Support legislation to require Homeowner's Association (HOA) Management Companies to have approval of the transfer fee by the HOA's Board of Directors with proper notice to all homeowners.
44. Support legislation that would require an advisory statement to be provided to buyers defining "homeowner's association" and its effect on residents/owners within the association.

Zoning/Land Use

45. Favor any efforts to prohibit abuses of private property rights through zoning, the permitting process, and other actions.
46. Oppose any proposed takings of private property rights by a body of government, unless through formal condemnation proceedings and/or if just compensation is paid to the owner.
47. Favor requiring due process to enact any zoning, floodplain, or similar ordinance affecting property values or rights, to ensure the purpose of the ordinance is not merely to implement social goals.

As approved

48. Support the basic principle of private property ownership of riverbeds not determined to be navigable.
49. Rezoning should occur only with the property owner's approval.
50. Support legal non-conforming uses and acknowledge that they are an integral portion of a property's value, usability, and uniqueness in the marketplace.

Subdivisions

51. Favor efforts to enforce compliance of county and municipal ordinances with the state Enabling Act with respect to lot splits and minor land divisions.
52. Favor any efforts to require that subdivision regulations at all levels of government be in agreement.
53. Generally, oppose any efforts to establish impact fees but consider each proposal individually.
54. Counties should not be granted similar authority as cities to regulate land use, including limiting the number of lot splits.
55. The maximum amount of parcels allowed for a property to be split without resulting in a subdivision should not be less than five.

Flood Control

56. Favor changes to flood plain ordinances which would provide for the property's removal from a flood plain designation once any problems have been mitigated.
57. Oppose any change to flood plain regulation or elevations exceeding Federal Emergency Management Agency national flood insurance standards and criteria unless historical and engineering data prove the regulation or elevations necessary.
58. Oppose flood control districts' ability to take or use private property for anything except direct flood control.

State Trust Lands

59. Support efforts to change the state Land Commissioner's ability to engage in the exchange of state trust lands.
60. Favor systematic and phased release of trust land.
61. Favor traditional compatible uses for state trust lands.
62. Permit the utilization and location of physically existing public roadways for ingress/egress (public roadway and access roads) and utility easements or rights of way.
63. Support the elimination of archaeological and native plant requirements when an applicant is locating the public roadway, access road or utility easement within a previously disturbed area.
64. The expansion of the parties to whom a perpetual right of way easement will be granted to include, but not be limited to: the dominant tenement, persons, corporations, limited liability corporations, partnerships, homeowner associations, and trusts.
65. Support the modernization and enhancement of the State Trust Land mission.

Federal Land

66. Favor requiring federal land management agencies to continue to collect public opinion on any proposals for changes in land use designations or fees for use of public lands.
67. Monitor proposed changes in designations of federal lands (e.g., parks, wilderness, scenic highways, etc.) and ensure private property rights.
68. Favor efforts to broaden the definition of excess land and simplify the criteria for its release for sale to private ownership.
69. Favor efforts to simplify the criteria and time frame for federal and private land exchanges.

As approved

Neighborhood/Habitability

70. Oppose change in the state's reasonable occupancy density standards for residential rental properties.
71. Oppose efforts to establish rent control of any kind.
72. Favor efforts to reduce the procedural time to evict residential tenants, requiring speedy service of legal documents, court action, and response by tenants.
73. Oppose any legislation related to blighted properties that would be inconsistent with the Arizona Landlord/Tenant Act.
74. Support efforts to require due process notice of all complaints or inspections of real property by governmental bodies, and oppose any consolidation of either by property, owner, etc.
75. Where civil responsibilities and criminal liabilities are placed on the property owner, make certain that they:
 - a. equally apply to all classes of property and are clearly defined
 - b. are accompanied by clearly defined and achievable remedies
 - c. do not abridge constitutionally guaranteed rights
 - d. do not result in financial burdens to the property owner that results in the taking of this property without reasonable compensation.
76. When registration of property owners is mandated, that it applies to all classes of property.
77. Support efforts toward the creation of a statewide pool barrier ordinance.

Transportation

78. Favor efforts to timely develop an updated statewide transportation system, including infrastructure for mass transit, after a comprehensive study of all alternatives.
79. Oppose efforts to establish additional fuel taxes for non-transportation purposes.
80. Arizona REALTORS® supports efforts to ensure that the Highway Users Revenue Funds are distributed throughout the state based upon population within a county.
81. Support ADOTS statewide "Long Range Transportation Plan" as required by the Federal Government (23 U.S.C. 135)
82. Support statewide transportation planning, accountability and acceleration of construction efforts.

Growth Management

83. Growth should not be limited if it affects the rights of property owners to move or build what they want within reasonable zoning requirements or without just compensation for any resulting government takings.
84. Growth boundaries affecting local governmental entities should be opposed by Arizona REALTORS® at all costs.
85. Arizona REALTORS® opposes efforts that diminish the affordability of real property.

Housing Affordability

86. Support legislation that would:
 - a. Educate the public to housing opportunity programs.
 - b. Increase funding/opportunity for housing assistance primarily through grants and other voluntary efforts.
 - c. Stimulate infill incentives.
 - d. Assist in expanding housing opportunities for special needs, service workforce, minorities, and first-time homebuyers.

Increase and/ or continue affordable and reliable utilities
87. Exemptions to impact fees should be provided for housing marketed to low and moderate-income households.

As approved

88. Encourage planning activities that promote affordable housing through higher density and mixed-use development.
89. Work with the Arizona Department of Housing in providing education and information on home ownership.

General Topics

90. Favor requiring government at all levels to meet the same building standards and codes required of private citizens.
91. Oppose efforts to curtail licensees' rights to make solicitations.
92. Oppose any change in the exemption of principals from workers' compensation insurance on independent contractors and sole proprietors affiliated with them.
93. Oppose state legislation that would make fire suppression mandatory in new homes.
94. Support legislation that would allow both the buyer's agent and the listing agent in the same firm to represent buyer and seller without creating a dual agency.
 - The legislation would not affect the legal implications of "actual knowledge" of any agent; in other words, the agents have the same disclosure duties regarding known material facts.

Legislation addressing this issue could:

- a. Allow buyers and sellers full representation in "in-house" sales, which is what they expect and deserve (e.g., pointing out features to buyers that aren't material defects but could concern some buyers which could dissuade the buyer client from buying and be detrimental to the client seller).
 - b. Eliminate the "legal fiction" of dual agency in "in-house" sales, where the two agents may not even know each other and never share information.
 - c. Continue to recognize dual agency when a licensee personally represents both parties to the transaction and requires informed written consent.
 - d. Require consent of the appointment to inform and protect the consumer.
 - e. Put into statute what has been left unclear by the common law of agency.
 - f. Clarify the role of the broker in an "in-house" sale.
 - g. Allow the agent to seek guidance from the broker but require that the broker keep confidential information confidential.
 - h. Continue to keep the broker liable for the acts of the agent.
95. Support local efforts to fight for the continued right for real estate-associated signage to be placed on public or private property with permission of the property owner or appropriate party.
 96. Monitor and protect Independent Contractor status.
 97. Support legislation that would increase the handyman exemption.

Insurance

98. Support efforts to promote affordability and availability of homeowner's insurance.
99. Support efforts to protect policy coverage for damages related to natural disasters such as flooding and fire, specifically flooding after fire.

2024-2025 Legislative Program Policy Positions

The following statements have been formulated and compiled as a result of the REALTOR® Caucus as well as revised/updated policy positions from the –2023-2024 approved positions. The list contains specific issues that Arizona REALTORS® expects to introduce or strongly support as part of a coalition in the upcoming session or two. The following Arizona REALTORS® legislative statements are positions Arizona REALTORS® will address during the next two years.

As approved

- Monitor and work on legislation within constitutional boundaries, as may prove necessary, to limit an HOA's ability to: (1) restrict private property rights; and (2) charge assessments and other fees.
- Continue to work at the Arizona Corporation Commission on solar lease agreements, rate design, consumer protections, deregulation, current line extension policies.
- Continue to monitor the 'broadening of the base' as it pertains to TPT (Transaction Privilege Tax) statutes.
- Work with Department of Financial Institutions and Insurance Director to address concerns regarding appraisals and process to challenge appraisals.
- Monitor Sign Restriction Legislation.
- Continue to monitor and actively engage in the Governor's stakeholder meetings, legislation, and executive orders as it pertains to water.
- Examine and take possible action on water and irrigation districts within Special Taxing Districts as it pertains to the district voting structure.
- Monitor and take possible action on legislation related to public report requirements; specifically, as it pertains to instances that deem owners, that did not personally subdivide the lots, a "subdivider" under A.R.S. § 32-2101(55) and therefore must comply with the public report requirements.
- Monitor and actively engage in stakeholder meetings, legislation, and executive orders as it pertains to public health emergency related policies.
- Research municipal use of drone imaging and/or satellite imaging for purposes of recording property size and take possible action to limit authority.
- Research and take possible action to identify state level funding for the National Flood Insurance Program mapping, specifically the use of LIDAR mapping.
- Continue to monitor Short Term Rental legislation and take action to protect private property rights.
- Research and take possible action to extinguish lien rights after an appropriate amount of time following the dissolution or bankruptcy of a solar panel company.
- Continue to monitor and actively engage HOA policy as it pertains to public disclosure and electronic posting.
- Monitor and take possible action on legislation to address discrimination as it pertains to housing issues.
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- Monitor and take possible action to improve transparency and sunset dates of Community Facility Districts. Monitor and take possible action on legislation reducing implied warranty protections for homeowners.
- Monitor and take possible action on legislation reducing deed fraud.
- Work with Department of Real Estate and Department of Financial Institutions and Insurance Director to address and take legislative action in regards to concerns surrounding joint ventures.