

# **REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Party Political Survival Initiative**

## **Talking Points**

### **Why Did NAR Create the REALTOR<sup>®</sup> 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 ó 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 rulings that only allowed hard-dollars ó those funds specifically allocated for political purposes ó 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<sup>®</sup> 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<sup>®</sup> 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.