



Washington Association of REALTORS®

Government Affairs Program

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REALTORS® recognize the need to sustain and enhance the quality of life enjoyed by Washington's citizens. We believe we can build better communities by supporting quality growth and seeking sustainable economies and housing opportunities that embrace the environmental qualities we cherish, while protecting property rights.

Protecting Property Rights

REALTORS® believe that private property rights are fundamental to our free-market economic system and a cornerstone upon which this nation was founded. The United States and Washington Constitutions recognize and protect the natural right to own property. *A strong economy depends upon preserving the right to freely own, use and transfer real property.*

Ensuring Economic Vitality

REALTORS® believe a strong economy with full employment for our citizens throughout the state remains the single biggest key to our quality of life. *A healthy economy sustains vibrant communities for living and working. Commercial, industrial and residential growth, in turn, sustains a healthy economy.* Economic development brings new opportunity and improved quality of life for city residents by increasing jobs, tax base, purchasing power, diversity, availability of goods and services, and offering community revitalization and improvement. An increased tax base is crucial to government's ability to deliver necessary public services, new amenities for neighborhoods, and maintain infrastructure to serve the needs of the community.

Providing Housing Opportunities

REALTORS® believe home ownership is the cornerstone of the American Dream and deserves a preferred place in our system of values. Home ownership contributes to community responsibility; civic, economic, business and employment stability; family security and well being. *Every citizen has the right to safe, decent and affordable housing near where they work, shop and play, and that choice in style and location is critical to increasing home ownership.* Furthermore, these objectives should be met through market-driven approaches that foster a wide-range of urban, suburban and rural housing choices at all price levels. Accommodating growth relieves pressure on housing prices and provides increased opportunities for homeownership.

Preserving Our Environment

REALTORS® recognize the incredible gift that Washington's natural environment offers to our state's citizens. Furthermore, we recognize the importance of parks, open space and the environment to our quality of life and therefore the marketability of surrounding property. *To maintain our region's quality of life and to protect the environment, REALTORS® support policies that encourage conservation and wise use of natural resources and critical areas through incentives and sufficient compensation.* In order to protect the environment effectively, REALTORS® believe government must plan for and guide quality commercial, industrial and residential growth using innovative planning techniques, while recognizing the importance of local decision-making, private property rights, and the value of a healthy economic sector and attainable homeownership opportunities.

Building Better Communities

REALTORS® believe communities flourish best when they offer a high quality of life at a reasonable cost. Livable communities offer a variety of affordable housing choices, nearby employment opportunities, an economically viable commercial sector, good schools, safe neighborhoods, quality public services, ample recreation and park areas, open space, efficient transportation systems, and the infrastructure that provides the framework to the quality of life we enjoy in our communities. *To promote livable communities, governments should encourage quality growth through policies sufficiently funding transportation and infrastructure (roads, water, sewer, etc.) that provides the framework for a community's quality of life, and lays the essential groundwork for accommodating quality commercial, industrial and residential growth.*