

What You Can Do About Bad Legislation

by Vena Jones-Cox

With the recent spate of almost inexplicable anti-investor laws being passed by Florida, Maryland, Texas, and North Carolina [***Editor's Note: and New Jersey***], you might be wondering what you can do to keep similar measures from being passed in your city or state.

And don't think that they won't. The public's understanding of what we do is so limited and the media hype about the bad operators in our business so rampant-that most legislators in this country can't find one single reason NOT to tie our hands in every way possible. And, just as we are aware of what's going on legislatively throughout the country, so are our lawmakers. It will just be a matter of time before your local representative decides it's time to clone one of these stupid regulations where you live and work.

So what can you do? The answer is simple - support your state investor's association if you have one, and encourage your local group leaders to start one if you don't.

See, the worst of these laws are being passed at the state or local level, which makes it nearly impossible for a truly national organization to focus on the problems that affect you directly. A state organization, on the other hand, can aim your personal efforts - as well as your financial donations straight at the problem.

Yes, we will also need a national organization to lobby on our behalf at the federal level, and yes, we need to support this organization with our dollars as well. But my experience over the last decade tells me that state and local level issues are most effectively dealt with by investors who live in that state or city coming forward and making their voices heard - not by representatives of a D.C.-based organization swooping in and trying to affect local laws and ordinances.

If you're lucky enough to be in a state that already has an up-and-running state organization like Ohio (OREIA.com), Illinois (IRPOA.org), Pennsylvania (proassoc.org), or Iowa, [***Editor's Note: New Jersey has the NJ Association of R.E Professionals, comprised of MREIA, GSREIA and South Jersey Investors***].

Contact the group to find out how to support it with your time and money. Some of these groups already have formal lobbyists and even Political Action Committees in place. Others are devoted entirely to grassroots (that's YOU) efforts.

All of them are struggling with the fact that the investor-on-the-street (you again) is seemingly too busy trying to buy houses to be concerned with the fact that the government is busily legislating away his ability to do so.

If enough people throw their support behind these groups, they can make HUGE strides in stopping these laws before they are even introduced.

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