

News Release

REALTOR® ASSOCIATION OF PIONEER VALLEY



The Western New England Center for Real Estate Services

Mission: To be the business and public policy advocate for REALTORS®.
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Area Realtors® join thousands in Washington, D.C. to Advocate Housing Policy Issues

Springfield, MA May 27, 2014 – Housing and private property issues were top of mind for more than 8,500 Realtors® who convened in Washington, D.C., May 12-17 for the 2014 Realtor® Party Convention & Trade Expo. Leading the 13-member local Realtor® delegation was Patrick S. Nolan, President of the Realtor® Association of Pioneer Valley, and Dawn Henry, President-Elect. Realtors® from across the country meet in Washington to attend the meetings and visit lawmakers on Capitol Hill.

A number of critical residential and commercial real estate issues took center stage at this year's meetings. Sessions focused on pressing topics like protecting real estate-related tax policies, reforming the secondary mortgage market and the accessibility of mortgage credit and loan programs.

“As the leading advocate for homeownership and real estate issues, Realtors® want to make sure these critical issues are recognized by our country's leaders and remain top of mind for them,” said Nolan. “Homeownership and commercial investment play a critical role in the long- and short-term health of this nation,” said Henry.

While in Washington, the local Realtors® met on Capitol Hill with Senators Elizabeth Warren and Ed Markey's staff, and the staff of Congressman Richard E. Neal and Jim McGovern to influence public policy decisions that will directly affect consumers' ability to buy, sell and own real estate. The Realtors® urged the Congressional staff of the need to reinstate the Mortgage Forgiveness Debt Relief Act, which expired at the end of 2013. The expired tax provision provided relief to individuals following a loan modification, short sale or foreclosure.

“With proposed legislation being debated in Congress this term that could have a significant impact on consumers and the real estate market, it was important for Realtors® to meet with lawmakers,” said Nolan. “Through the strength of the Realtor® Party, we clearly conveyed our position on key issues that affect home buyers, sellers and real estate investors right here in the Pioneer Valley, ” Henry added.

Throughout the week Realtors® participated in sessions with a number of government officials and industry experts who addressed many of today’s critical housing, mortgage finance and real estate investment issues. During one session, Department of Housing and Urban Development Secretary Shaun Donovan announced a blueprint for greater consumer access to credit through a new FHA housing counseling program. Donovan said the agency is taking additional steps to expand access to mortgage credit for underserved borrowers.

Realtors® also heard from political strategists David Plouffe and Steve Schmidt who previewed the upcoming midterm elections and provided insights into the issues currently being debated in Congress and their impact on Realtors® and the real estate industry. News anchor and political commentator Chris Matthews discussed the divided Congress and the Obama administration’s second-term agenda. Steve Berkowitz, CEO of Move Inc. (operator of realtor.com®), shared his vision for how the company will continue to provide consumers with the best content, tools and professional expertise they need to find a home through the site and by working with a Realtor®. National Association of Realtors® Chief Economist Lawrence Yun shared his latest outlook for the economy and residential and commercial markets, and expects positive market improvements throughout 2014.

The group also had the chance to explore the latest industry innovations and stay up to date on how new products are transforming the real estate business, as more than 100 exhibitors showcased the newest real estate products and services for the industry during the Trade Expo.

The Pioneer Valley Realtor® delegation included: Corinne Fitzgerald of Northfield, Dawn Henry of Palmer, Monica Kapinos of Longmeadow, Meghan McCormick of Northampton, Patrick Nolan of Agawam, Susan Renfrew of Bernardston, Russ Sabadosa of East Longmeadow, Ben Scranton, Brian Sears, Kevin Sears and Vincent Walsh of Springfield, and Edmund G. and Peggy Woods of Holyoke.

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Organized in 1915, the REALTOR® Association of Pioneer Valley (RAPV) is a professional trade organization with more than 1,600 members in the Pioneer Valley of western Massachusetts. RAPV is one of 1,500 local chapters of the National Association of REALTORS®. RAPV covers 68 cities and towns in 3 counties; Franklin, Hampshire and Hampden. The term, REALTOR®, is a registered trademark for use exclusively by members of the National Association of REALTORS®, whose members subscribe to a strict Code of Ethics.

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