



# STANDING ADVOCACY and PUBLIC POLICY POSITIONS

*(March 7, 2018)*

---

## CORE ADVOCACY and PUBLIC POLICY PRINCIPLES

**Private Property Ownership.** We believe the political stability and economic prosperity of our nation are dependent upon the right of the individual to own and freely transfer real property and to exercise and enjoy the benefits of real property ownership. The value of private property should not be diminished or jeopardized by governmental action at any level without just compensation to the owner. The interpretation of existing federal laws and regulations should not be expanded in such a way as to limit private property ownership rights.

**Home Ownership.** We believe that home ownership serves as a cornerstone of our democratic system of government and deserves a preferred place in our system of values. Home ownership contributes to community responsibility, civic stability, family security and well-being. We know that home ownership is the American Dream and a primary goal of most American families, and we believe that every individual should have the opportunity to live in safe and decent housing. We encourage continued support of the housing needs of the low and moderate-income citizens who comprise the workforce in all communities, as well as the needs of the elderly and the handicapped.

**Taxation.** Any tax system enacted by local governments, the General Assembly or the Congress should encourage savings, investment, and home ownership. We support the continued deductibility of mortgage interest. We oppose any tax provisions that place an unfair burden on property owners, purchasers or sellers. We oppose any effort at the state or federal level to tax professional services.

**Land Use.** We believe in the fundamental right of all private property owners to work through local government to determine the highest and best use of their land. We believe that zoning, planning and land use decisions are best made at the local level. We maintain that planning for the classification and use of land must adequately consider the needs of housing affordability, agriculture, transportation infrastructure, commercial and industrial growth as well as quality of life and a healthy local economy.

**Political Affairs.** We believe that involvement in political activity is a privilege and the responsibility of every citizen. We encourage qualified citizens to make themselves available for public office and public service. We encourage continual participation in local, state, and national political affairs and will actively support those candidates who pledge, and by their actions, preserve and strengthen America's free enterprise system, which is based upon the underlying principle of private property ownership. We believe any attempt to reduce the participation of voluntary political action committees in elections undermines a basic political freedom and civic right.

**Legislative Advocacy.** It is a top priority of the **GREATER PIEDMONT REALTORS®** to monitor closely the legislative and regulatory process at all levels of government, to advocate strongly for legislation/regulation that is in the best interest of our members, and to oppose vigorously legislation/regulation that serves to diminish property ownership, value or affordability or the ability of our members to make a living unfettered by onerous and unnecessary statutory, regulatory or financial constraints. It is a central responsibility of this association to keep its members informed about the issue positions that the **GREATER PIEDMONT REALTORS®** adopts in this regard and the status of any pending ordinance, legislation or regulation that impacts the real estate profession.

**Environment.** Efforts to control pollution and to protect natural resources must be balanced with efforts to increase energy efficiency and energy independence, economic vitality and productivity. We are concerned with the preservation of our wetlands, and we realize that we have a responsibility to educate and to work with local, state and federal government officials toward responsible development and planning that is equitable. We also believe that planning and development must consider the divergent needs of transportation, housing, agriculture, commerce and industry.

# FOCUSED POLICY STATEMENTS

## *INFRASTRUCTURE*

**Broadband Enhancement and Expansion.** **GREATER PIEDMONT REALTORS®** supports the enhancement and expansion of broadband infrastructure and services so that more Piedmont residents have access to reliable broadband. **GREATER PIEDMONT REALTORS®** believes that broadband access is a critical component to the preservation of property values; we also believe that reliable broadband is a key factor in retaining and attracting businesses that will allow our economy to grow and prosper. **GREATER PIEDMONT REALTORS®** believes that government should not compete with the private sector to deploy broadband infrastructure, and will encourage local governments to work with the private sector for the purpose of securing necessary funding and financing that will protect governmental entities from owning and operating broadband infrastructure and reduce the risk of significant financial losses.