



WESTERN UPSTATE ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®

Government Affairs Accomplishments

November 1, 2023

Stepping it up

Your Western Upstate Association of REALTORS® made a major commitment to government affairs in 2023 by hiring our first full-time Government Affairs Director, Michael Dey. We can report these accomplishments since 2022:

1. Anderson District 1 Impact Fee: Defeated an \$11,300 per house, and \$7,700 per apartment, impact fee.
2. City of Anderson Sign Ordinance: Worked with the City of Anderson to update their Sign Ordinance to address legal issues without unduly burdening Realtors and property owners.
3. City of Anderson Tree Ordinance: Advocated for changes to the City of Anderson Tree Ordinance which was negatively affecting new development in the city. City council adopted an ordinance that protects existing trees and requires new tree planting without unduly burdening new development.
4. Clemson Occupancy Standards: Advocated against a Clemson ordinance that would have reduced the number of occupants in rental housing in the city. The ordinance was not brought to city council for consideration.
5. Oconee County 20/40 Ordinance: Advocated against a subdivision ordinance in Oconee County that would have imposed different density standards for large subdivisions versus smaller subdivisions. The ordinance was not brought to county council for consideration.
6. Walhalla Short-Term Rental Ordinance: Advocated for changes to a proposed short-term rental ordinance in Walhalla. The ordinance was not brought to city council for consideration.
7. Anderson County Stormwater Manual Update: Helped Anderson County update its stormwater manual.
8. Anderson County RV Park Ordinance: Helped Anderson County draft a new ordinance regulating RV Parks, which county council adopted.
9. Easley Zoning Ordinance: Helped GGAR advocate for Realtor interests in the adoption of Easley's updated zoning ordinance. The new ordinance met community needs without unnecessarily adding to the cost of new housing.

State Accomplishments

Your association also is working for you in Columbia. What we accomplished recently:

1. Business License Taxes: Passed legislation limiting real estate agent exposure to business license taxes. Your association is currently defending the law against a lawsuit by the City of Mauldin.
2. Workforce Housing: Passed legislation to allow 15% of accommodations taxes to be used for workforce housing. Accommodations taxes are collected when hotel rooms and



short-term rentals are rented. The additional funding will help provide housing for workers in the retail and tourism sectors.

3. New Health and Environment Agencies Created: Passed legislation to split the Department of Health and Environmental Control into two separate agencies. One will focus on public health and the other will focus on environmental protection. DHEC will be officially separated on July 1, 2024.
4. Airports vs. Private Property Rights: We worked with partners in the business community to block a regulation by the SC Aeronautics Commission that would have negatively affected future development potential near the Oconee Regional Airport, Pickens County Airport, and Anderson Regional Airport. The Downtown Airport in Greenville was the most seriously impacted by the proposed regulations.

Federal Accomplishments

Washington is a tough place for real estate lately, but we continue to advocate and score wins for Realtors:

1. National Flood Insurance Program extension: NFIP has been extended short-term measures since 2017. Most recently, it was extended in September until November 17, 2023.
2. WOTUS: Your association participated in a lawsuit against the Environmental Protection Agency on Waters of the US (WOTUS). The lawsuit argued that the EPA overstepped its authority under the Clean Water Act when it blocked a couple in Idaho, the Sacketts, from building a home. The US Supreme Court agreed, forcing the EPA to rewrite its regulations to be more sensitive to private property rights.
3. FHFA Rescinds Fee Increases: At NAR's urging because the proposed fee increases would harm housing affordability, the Federal Housing Finance Agency rescinded two proposed fee increases on mortgages.
4. HUD Reduced Mortgage Insurance Premiums: In another win for affordability in the face of rising interest rates, HUD reduced mortgage insurance premiums by 30 basis points.

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