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State of affairs: Where things stand at year-end

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MBREA|The Association for Valuation Professionals government affairs committee had a busy 2014. The association wrote and filed three pieces of legislation that would benefit appraisers in Massachusetts. Here is a summary of where things stand at year-end.

MBREA's bill for the licensing of appraisal management companies was engrossed by the Massachusetts House of Representatives in February. A different version of the bill passed in the Senate in July. The differences between the two were significant and resulted in action by the MBREA to have the House not agree to the Senate version.

We learned the Senate language we objected to came from the Division of Professional Licensure, the regulators of appraisers. In an effort to develop a consensus, MBREA's government affairs committee chair, Allan Cohen, committee members Deb Olken and Paul Morgan along with myself, presented an outline of the differences to the state board and subsequently met with board staff. Discussions are on-going with a goal of reaching an agreement on language all parties can agree to.

MBREA re-filed legislation to rescind disciplinary actions taken against appraisers who completed every version of USPAP in accordance with AQB criteria, but not in synch with state board policy. The measure passed in the Senate is awaiting action in the House. MBREA continues to advocate for its enactment before the end of this session.

MBREA also filed a bill that would limit the ability of the state board to pursue complaints about appraisals with an age that is outside of the USPAP Record Keeping Rule. The bill was heard by the joint committee on the judiciary and subsequently sent to a study committee.

The association also commented on a proposed rule published by six federal regulators concerning the minimum standards for the licensing of appraisal management companies. We expect the final rule may be published the first quarter of 2015.

The government affairs committee has an aggressive agenda for 2015. Depending upon what happens during the balance of the current session, the MBREA will re-file the three bills. In addition, we are drafting legislation to add Massachusetts to the list of 38 other licensing jurisdictions as a mandatory state for the performance of appraisal assignments.

MBREA members participating on the government affairs committee are Allan Cohen, Deb Olken, Susan Kelly, Murray Regan, Tom Whiting, Paul Morgan, Bill Lanciloti, Michael Correia, Tim Close, Rick Lipof, Greg Johnson and Jay Mavrakos with staff support from Steve Sousa.

We have made some inroads at the State House and DPL, but we still have a lot of work to do. You can be sure this committee will continue in its efforts to promote our profession, MBREA members, and all appraisers.

Stephen Sousa is the executive vice president of the Mass. Board of Real Estate Appraisers,

Boston.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540