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NH CIBOR president's message: Public Policy Committee of NHAR - by Ethan Ash

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Ethan Ash

As we move beyond the primary season, the focus on politics may wane for some, but in New Hampshire, the 2024 Legislature in Concord faces a considerable workload with over 1,300 bills awaiting consideration. The Public Policy Committee of the N.H. Association of Realtors (NHAR) is diligently reviewing these bills, identifying more than 100 that could potentially impact real estate agents and property owners.

NHAR has a strong track record of protecting real estate licensure and property owners' rights against encroachments by regulatory bodies at various levels of government. The Realtor Political Action Committee (RPAC) plays a crucial role in funding representation to ensure that qualified professionals understand the impact of specific bills on the real estate industry and strongly express desire to see our members support financially.

Two notable bills, SB480 and SB538, are highlighted in this message. SB480 addresses licensing issues that emerged last year, affecting instructors' ability to teach credited post-licensure classes. The bill aims to ensure that real estate instructors can more easily teach classes that help agents stay informed about new laws, rules, and procedures through ongoing education. SB538 focuses on the conversion of office space to residential space, introducing tax relief programs. This measure aims to contribute to affordable residential housing and manage office space surpluses, benefiting both the housing market and commercial real estate.

While other laws are under consideration, the Public Policy Committee remains committed to protecting the integrity of real estate licensing and clients' property rights.

Shifting to commercial real estate in 2024, the recent pause in interest rate hikes has injected excitement into the market. Following constant rate hikes in 2023, investors were hesitant, but the current stability in rates has motivated buyers to act. The message encourages buyers to capitalize on the optimism before potential future interest rate hikes by the Fed.

On a totally unrelated note nothing to do with real estate, but I think it is important as a New Hampshireer is HB1016. This bill proposes changes to the NH state flag to include the state motto. While this motto "Live Free or Die" does make me so proud as a resident it does not belong on our flag. A flag is not a note that is passed in class and should be easily identifiable from a distance. Decreasing the size of the seal, to put words on it, does not make our flag better. You can take a look at what Utah and Minnesota just did to improve their state flags. I know that this has nothing to do with real estate and public policy will not be addressing it, I plead to my fellow constituents to please leave the flag alone.

The message concludes by expressing a commitment to monitor policies at the local, state, and national levels, acknowledging their potential impact on the commercial real estate industry.

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