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President's message: News on the legislative front

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I hope everyone had a great spring season. It seems that the activity is really picking up and investors are starting to come off of those fences that they have been sitting on. In addition, nearly 75% of economists, surveyed by the National Association for Business Economics, say that the recession will end in the third quarter. Another 19% think the turnaround will come in the fourth quarter. The rest are betting on the first quarter of 2010. Americans seem to believe that things are getting better too. The Conference Board's Consumer Confidence Index rose 14.1 points in May to 54.9, the second month in a row in which there have been an increase.

On the legislative front, I recently came back from the NAR mid-year meetings in Washington, DC and can report that our concerns regarding the needs of commercial real estate are being heard. While attending the RCA national committee meeting, we discussed issues affecting our local markets and how the RCA can help. I am pleased to say that Jeff Hornberger, the RCA national staff executive will be here to address us on July 9th at our member meeting, to be held at the Massachusetts Association of Realtors building in Waltham. Please be sure to be there!

In addition to Hornberger, Lisa Brechtel, NAR's Senior Commercial Legislative and Regulatory Representative will be joining us to give us an update on TALF, Mark-to-Market, the energy bill and the Treasury's Public Private Investment Program (PPIP). All of these issues affect all of us, so don't miss it.

I also had the pleasure of attending the Massachusetts Association of Realtor "Day on Beacon Hill." I was happy to see so many commercial practitioners present. We had the chance to visit with our state legislators from all around the commonwealth and discuss with them the issues that are affecting our practice in commercial real estate. High on the list of priorities was the "Abandoned Property Rights/Copper Pipe Theft Prevention Bill" in the House (H2218) which we urged them to support. Another key bill in both the House and Senate is the "Selling City Owned Property Efficiently (SCOPE)" program. This bill would give municipalities the option of selling municipally owned vacant and underutilized properties on the open market, through the use of real estate practitioners, as opposed to having to use public auctions to dispose of the property. Again we strongly urged them to support these bills.

Additionally, we promoted the "Move and Store/Warehousing Bill (H1425, S1791)," which would clarify the landlord's obligation to store and move an evicted tenant's property during the eviction process. We asked for their support for this bill which would limit the landlord's responsibility to "move" an evicted tenant's property to 20 miles.

Finally, I want to remind all of you that the new state wide commercial database www.MASSCIE.com is up and running. It is powered by Catylist and will help you promote your commercial listings all over the state, region and country with just one entry. It is a cost-effective way

to share your listings and buyer's needs with other commercial practitioners. Don't miss out on this great benefit of our RCA-MA organization. Sign on now to register.

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