

The Legislative Session is coming to an end and I would like to report on MAR's 2011 Legislative priorities. This week Governor Barbour signed into law two of MAR's top priorities, legislation allowing compensation for providing Broker Price Opinions and The Mississippi Appraisal Management Company Registration Act, allowing the MS Appraisal Board to provide oversight and regulation to AMCs. Both bills will become effective July 1, 2011. MREC and the Appraisal Board will now begin the process of drafting and adopting regulations pertaining to these two laws.

See the links below to view the final version of the bills:

http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/documents/2011/pdf/sam/Amendment_Report_for_HB0990.pdf

http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/documents/2011/pdf/sam/Amendment_Report_for_HB1337.pdf

I want to personally thank everyone who took the time this year to respond to the Calls to Action. I can assure you that your grassroots involvement made a difference.

I would also like to report on HB 575 which prohibits the payment of a fee to a person imposing certain covenants on future conveyances of real property. The Governor has signed this legislation into law. It will become effective on July 1, 2011.

The Mississippi Association of REALTORS® opposes private real estate transfer fees. MAR believes such fees decrease affordability, serve no public purpose and provide no benefit to property purchasers or the community in which the property is located. Because private transfer fee deed restrictions are often difficult to discover and to therefore disclose prior to a transaction, REALTORS® risk liability issues.

You can find a copy of the legislation by clicking on the link below:

<http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/documents/2011/pdf/HB/0500-0599/HB0575SG.pdf>

2011 Final Legislative Update from MAR Governmental Affairs Director Derek Easley

I am also happy to report that Governor Barbour has signed HB 1285, the legislative fix to the owner financing exemption that was removed in the MS version of the SAFE ACT. This legislation became law the moment Governor Barbour signed it. To view that legislation click here:

<http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/documents/2011/pdf/HB/1200-1299/HB1285SG.pdf>

Below are other 2011 Legislative Priorities that died this year somewhere in the Legislative process.

State Income Tax Credit for 1st Time Homebuyers

- SB 2139 died again this year in the House of Representatives after passing the Senate.

Health Insurance Exchange Program

- HB 1220 died in Conference as a result of House and Senate negotiators being unable to reach a compromise. MAR supports legislation which will create a Health Insurance Exchange Program. Health insurance affordability and availability are top concerns for REALTORS®, most of whom are independent contractors.

Sunshine Legislation

- After passing the Senate, SB 2618 died in the House of Representatives for the sixth straight year. This legislation would have brought oversight and accountability to state agencies that enter into contracts with private attorneys.

Tax Incentives for Green Building

- HB 24 and SB 2115 both died in their respective committees this year. MAR was supporting the establishment of a tax incentive program that provides for tax credits or incentives when building to standards that are deemed to be energy efficient and/or environmentally friendly. Unfortunately, the failure of the bill was related to the budget being as tight as it is this year and any legislation such as tax incentives impact the State General Fund.