



**REALTORS® Working to Improve  
Our Quality of Life**  
*Jobs • Homes • Communities*

*We are REALTORS®.  
We are your neighbors.  
We are business owners.  
We are community leaders.  
We are parents and grandparents.  
We are REALTORS®.*

We are civic volunteers. We help make Mississippi a great place to live. We are REALTORS®.

Mississippi REALTORS® know how communities grow and prosper. Our livelihoods depend on it.

We understand the housing market and economy, as well as the amenities and environmental features that keep our communities healthy and attractive.

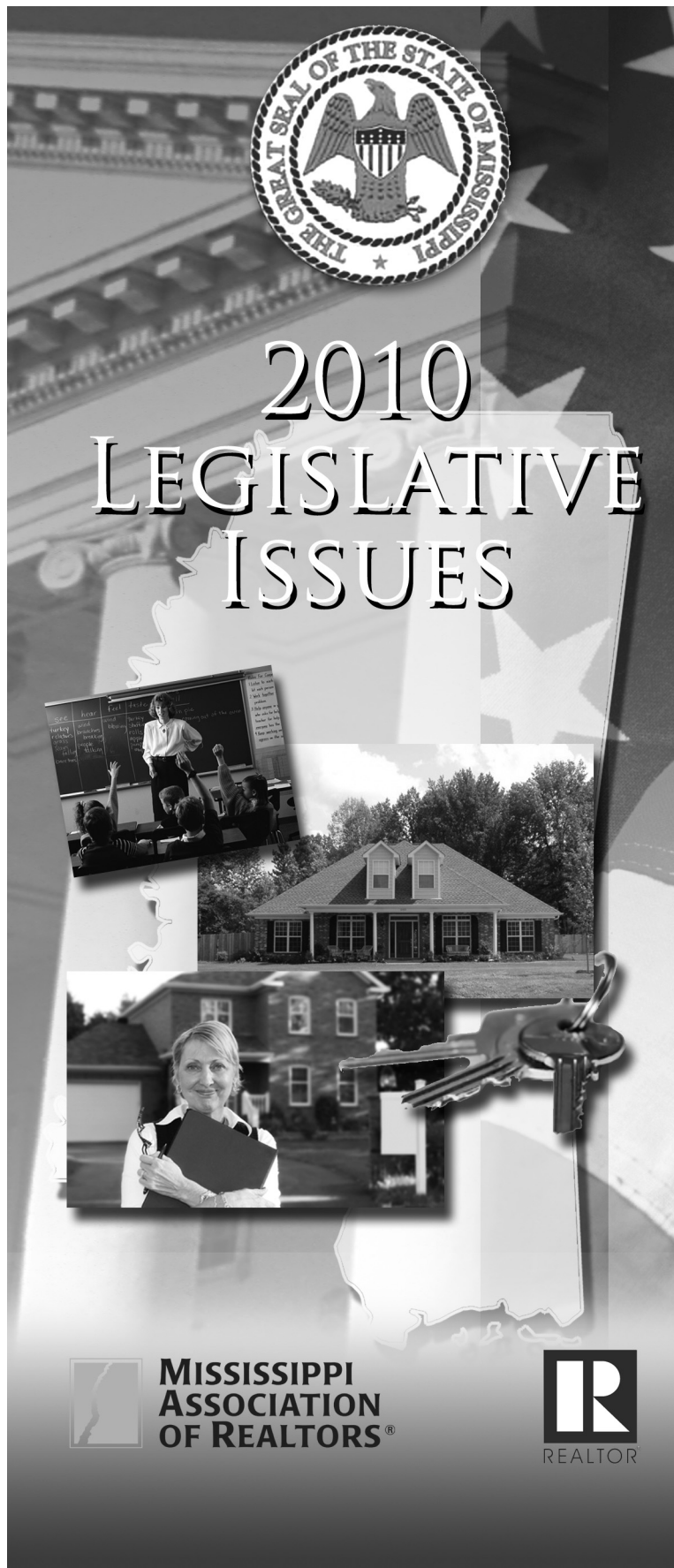
That's why we're involved in efforts to plan for our state's growth and to enhance the quality of life in our communities.

We're committed to being involved in moving Mississippi forward... because we live and work here, and we care deeply about our future.

REALTORS® are committed to:

- Protecting property owners
- Ensuring economic vitality
- Providing housing opportunity
- Preserving our national environment
- Building better communities

**The Mississippi Association of REALTORS® is the state's largest business trade association serving more than 5,500 REALTORS® active in all phases of brokerage, development, property management and appraisal.**



***A Message from MAR's President***

Dear State Legislators:

On behalf of the Mississippi Association of REALTORS®, the state's largest business trade association, I thank you for your dedication and service to our great state. Each year REALTORS® from across Mississippi convene here for "REALTOR® Day at the Capitol" to discuss key issues that matter to our businesses, promote the quality of life in our communities and ensure that homeownership remains an attainable dream for the hard-working citizens of our state.

The grassroots network of more than 5,500 REALTORS® across Mississippi is strong, and our political advocacy is even stronger. REALTORS® are actively involved in making their communities better places to live and work, and they recognize the vital importance of electing statewide leaders who understand the impact of a vibrant real estate market on the state's economy. They also understand the collective power of a united REALTOR® voice at our state capitol.



To this end, we present to you in this 2011 Legislative Issues Guide, a snapshot of the main issues on which Mississippi REALTORS® will focus during this legislative session. We fully recognize the economic challenges and opportunities legislators will face during this legislative session relative to the state budget and understand that difficult choices must be made. We're grateful for your leadership and thank you again for all you do on behalf of the state of Mississippi. We're proud to be Mississippians, and we're proud to be Mississippi REALTORS®.

Respectfully,

*Dee Denton*

Dee Denton  
2011 President



4274 Lakeland Drive  
Jackson, MS 39232-1000  
Toll-free: 800-747-1103  
Tel: 601-932-5241  
Fax: 601-932-0382  
E-mail: [mar@msrealtors.org](mailto:mar@msrealtors.org)  
Web: [www.msrealtors.org](http://www.msrealtors.org)



**Dee Denton**  
2011 President  
[deedenton@aol.com](mailto:deedenton@aol.com)



**Watkins "Noggin" Wild**  
President-Elect/Chair  
MAR Legislative & Regulatory Affairs Committee  
[noggin@wildrealty.com](mailto:noggin@wildrealty.com)



**Ric Corts**  
Chair  
MAR Political Action Committee (MARPAC)  
[riccorts@remax.net](mailto:riccorts@remax.net)



**Beth Hansen**  
Chief Executive Officer  
601-932-5241  
[bhansen@msrealtors.org](mailto:bhansen@msrealtors.org)



**Derek Easley**  
Governmental Affairs Director/Lobbyist  
601-259-7689  
[deasley@msrealtors.org](mailto:deasley@msrealtors.org)



**Ronald D. Farris**  
General Counsel  
601-668-9122  
[ron@farrislawgroup.net](mailto:ron@farrislawgroup.net)



**Following is a summary of key issues on which MAR will be working in the 2011 legislative session:**



The Mississippi Association of REALTORS® serves as the voice of real estate in Mississippi, fostering legislation that supports homeownership and the real estate profession.

**Compensation for performing Broker Price Opinions (BPO)**

MAR supports legislation allowing compensation for Broker Price Opinions consistent with applicable federal guidelines.

SUPPORT / OPPOSE Bill Number: SB \_\_\_ HB \_\_\_

**Provide oversight and regulation of Appraisal Management Companies**

MAR will support legislation that provides the Appraisal Board with oversight and regulation of Appraisal Management Companies doing business in the state of MS.

SUPPORT / OPPOSE Bill Number: SB \_\_\_ HB \_\_\_

**State Income Tax Credit for First Time Homebuyers**

REALTORS® will support efforts to provide a state income tax credit for first time homebuyers. Such an incentive would help more Mississippians turn the dream of homeownership into a reality.

SUPPORT / OPPOSE Bill Number: SB \_\_\_ HB \_\_\_

**Health Insurance Exchange Program**

MAR supports legislation which will create a Health Insurance Exchange Program in order to allow employees to purchase a policy with pretax dollars and allow a policy to move with its owner to another business. Health insurance affordability and availability are top concerns for REALTORS®, most of whom are independent contractors.

SUPPORT / OPPOSE Bill Number: SB \_\_\_ HB \_\_\_

**Sunshine Legislation**

This legislation will bring oversight and accountability to contracts the attorney general's office enters into with private attorneys. Provisions include requiring the attorney general to get proposals from three law firms before signing a contract with a firm to represent the state and requiring the State Personnel Services Contract Review Board to review legal contracts.

SUPPORT / OPPOSE Bill Number: SB \_\_\_ HB \_\_\_

**Tax Incentives for Green Building**

MAR will support establishing 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. Also, allow for tax incentives for the purchase of energy efficient appliances. For example, permitting that no sales tax is due when purchasing solar and geothermal equipment. Also, establish that the equipment is not subject to real property tax.

SUPPORT / OPPOSE Bill Number: SB \_\_\_ HB \_\_\_

**Section 42 Housing Ad Valorem Issues**

Work with other interested parties to find a compromise to the property valuation method with regards to ad valorem taxes of Section 42 Housing. Section 42 is a tax credit system set up for owners and developers of low-income housing developments to encourage them to build and maintain housing for lower income families.

SUPPORT / OPPOSE Bill Number: SB \_\_\_ HB \_\_\_

**Education Initiatives**

It is the stated position that public education is a priority of the Mississippi Association of REALTORS®. MAR evaluates opportunities as they present themselves that support pro education/school initiatives pertaining to the betterment of quality of life in Mississippi Communities.

SUPPORT / OPPOSE Bill Number: SB \_\_\_ HB \_\_\_

**Eminent Domain**

MAR will oppose any Eminent Domain legislation that could have a negative effect on future economic development projects. MAR believes that an exemption for the Mississippi Major Economic Development Act (projects such as Nissan and Toyota) should be contained in any Eminent Domain Legislation.

SUPPORT / OPPOSE Bill Number: SB \_\_\_ HB \_\_\_

**Other issues**

BILL # \_\_\_\_\_ SUPPORT / OPPOSE

Explanation \_\_\_\_\_

BILL # \_\_\_\_\_ SUPPORT / OPPOSE

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BILL # \_\_\_\_\_ SUPPORT / OPPOSE

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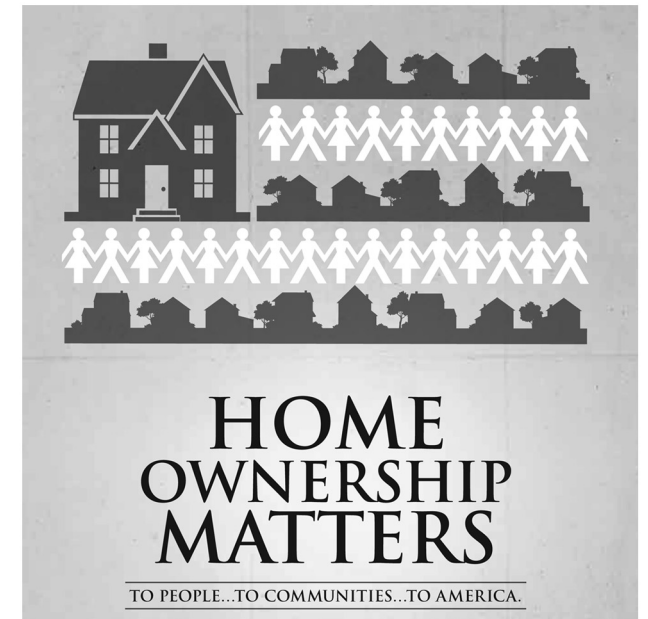
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Explanation \_\_\_\_\_



[www.msrealtors.org](http://www.msrealtors.org)



**WHY HOME OWNERSHIP MATTERS**

**TO PEOPLE...**

- Home owners are **happier and healthier** and enjoy a greater feeling of control over their lives.
- Owning a home is one of the **best ways to build long-term wealth**. Historically, a home owner's net worth has ranged from 31 to 46 times that of a renter.
- Home owners are **free to redecorate, renovate, and modify** their homes as they wish.
- Most home owners enjoy **stable housing costs**—a fixed-rate mortgage payment might not change for 15 to 30 years while rent typically increases 3 % a year.
- Home owners can typically **deduct mortgage interest and property taxes** on their federal individual income tax return.

**TO COMMUNITIES...**

- People who own homes vote more, volunteer more and **contribute more to their neighborhoods**.
- Home owners do not move as frequently as renters, providing more **neighborhood stability**. In turn, this stability **helps reduce crime and supports neighborhood upkeep**.
- Children of home owners **do better in school, stay in school longer**, are more likely to participate in organized activities and spend less time in front of the television.

**TO AMERICA...**

- 67% of American households are owner-occupied**. America is a nation of home owners.
- Home owners pay 80 to 90% of federal individual income taxes**, contributing to federal programs that benefit all Americans.
- Every home purchased **pumps \$60,000 into the economy** for furniture, home improvements and related items.
- Housing accounts for **more than 15% of the national Gross Domestic Product**, a key driver of our national economy.
- For these reasons and more, home ownership is the American Dream!

As REALTORS®, we know all this. But not everyone does.

**So spread the word: Home Ownership Matters!**  
For more information and data on the points above, see [REALTOR.org/Homeownership](http://REALTOR.org/Homeownership)

