

Florida Realtors® and the Florida Legislature

Working together to build strong communities

Florida's 125,000 Realtors® applaud lawmakers' efforts to revitalize the Florida real estate market. There's much at stake. Real property — building it, buying it, leasing it, selling it — contributes billions to the Florida economy every year.

- **The real estate sector (including leasing services) accounted for 17.1 percent of the state's Gross State Product in 2006, or \$122.2 billion.**
- **In 2006, when the real estate market was strong, property taxes contributed \$30.5 billion to local governments, school boards and other taxing districts.**
- **Real estate activity creates jobs. In 2007, 598,100 workers were employed in the construction sector and 173,200 were employed in the real estate sector, representing 9.6 percent of all Florida's workers.**

To be sure, these numbers are impressive.

But what Florida Realtors® value more is that we've helped millions of Floridians achieve the American Dream of homeownership. And when our residents own a part of the Dream, they contribute greatly to their communities.

Studies consistently show that children who live in owned homes are well adjusted and score high on academic tests. What's more, their parents are more likely to be involved in civic activities and to vote in local and national elections. They purchase goods and services from local merchants, contributing to the retail sector of their communities. And they take pride in their homes, their neighborhoods and their communities.

We're working to keep Florida's economic engine running strong, but we need your help. Please review the issue capsules in this brochure and then call on us to help as you consider the best ways to keep Florida strong and its economy vital.

**We're Florida's Realtors®
125,000 strong**



TOGETHER we can accomplish great things for the place we call home.

- **Ensure that legislative efforts concerning residential foreclosures, including rentals, are fair and equitable to all parties.**
- **Allocate funds to prevent, combat and publicize the dangers of unlicensed real estate activity in Florida.**
- **Reduce the fee for filing an eviction notice to a more reasonable amount.**

Realtors® appreciate the difficulties faced by state leaders; but in the end, we all want the same thing — **a better Florida for families and businesses.**

A strong housing market builds strong communities.

The Florida Association of Realtors® urges you to take the following actions to revitalize the Florida real estate market and, in turn, the Florida economy:

- **Lower taxes for non-homestead property owners and create incentives for first-time buyers.** Please vote YES on HJR 97 and HB 7057 by Rep. Carl Domino and SB 532 by Sen. Evelyn Lynn. These bills would cap annual assessments on all non-homestead property at 5 percent and provide first-time Florida buyers an additional homestead exemption that phases out over five years. Both provisions will create a more equitable property tax system in Florida.
- **A robust insurance market is vital to Florida's economic recovery and to the state's continued success.** Take the bold steps needed to attract private capital to the insurance market. This will stimulate competition, stabilize rates and create a sustainable residential and commercial property insurance market. Florida Realtors® support the extension and expansion of the My Safe Florida Home Program.
- **Stimulate the economy by relieving regulatory restraints to development and by expediting the comprehensive plan amendment process for certain areas of the state.** Vote YES for SB 360 by Sen. Mike Bennett, a bill that also enables local governments to reduce or eliminate impact fees immediately — not wait 90 days, as is currently required.
- **Housing assistance is needed now more than ever.** Allocate all monies in the Sadowski Affordable Housing Trust Fund to state and local housing programs. The \$123 million available in the trust fund should be used to provide opportunities for Floridians to purchase homes and reduce the current over-stock of inventory. These sales will go a long way toward providing jobs and generating substantial tax revenue.

Florida Association of Realtors®
Official sponsor of the word HOME.