



PSAR's Good Government Corner

by Richard D'Ascoli, Director of Government Affairs

This was a year for big changes both locally and in the Federal Government. What happened in 2006 and how will the political landscape of 2006 affect your business in the South County in 2007?

2006 Was another politically charged year. It was the sixth consecutive year where our state and local governments have asked voters to go to the polls and make decisions that impact our businesses. REALTORS® in South San Diego worked hard to create a favorable political climate. We have elected officials in all levels of government who understand our issues.

Sacramento:

In 2006 we re-elected a pro-business governor who understands real estate, and housing. Governor Schwarzenegger has been a friend of organized real estate. The Governor signed some key legislation for REALTORS® this year. The Governor signed AB2365 which will increase professionalism in the business through the elimination of the conditional license. The Governor also signed a CAR sponsored bill that will make it easier for developers to develop affordable housing by forcing cities to streamline the permitting process. Developers should be able to rely on the same standards throughout the local government review process and not have the rules arbitrarily changed during the process.

South County Elected Officials:

Congressman Bob Filner was re-elected with support from our members who contribute to the REALTOR® Action Fund. Congressman Filner has supported NAR in its fight to keep banks out of real estate. He also has spoken out against an Administration proposal to eliminate the mortgage interest deduction. This deduction is very important to helping Americans achieve home ownership.

State Assembly Member Shirley Horton who is a former REALTOR® and PSAR President was re-elected to the State Assembly representing the 78th State Assembly District. Assembly Member Horton has supported all REALTOR® issues since becoming an Assemblymember in 2002.

In the 79th State Assembly District PSAR endorsed candidate Mary Salas who was elected for her first year as an Assembly Member. Assemblymember Salas is well versed in issues that affect your business. Her husband Sal Salas is a PSAR Member and has been involved in the business for many years. We are looking forward to working with her during the next six years.

PSAR is happy to have both endorsed and supported Cheryl Cox for Mayor of Chula Vista. Mayor Cox will fill a leadership vacuum that has been missing in Chula Vista since the early retirement of REALTOR® and Councilmember Patty Davis. Mayor Cox will bring a level of fiscal responsibility, compassion and business sense to the City. Mayor Cox has attended real estate training in the past at PSAR and has an understanding of the REALTOR® commitment to the Code of Ethics. The last time Chula Vista elected a challenger over an incumbent was in 1970. PSAR's Board of Directors took a chance supporting the challenger, but felt that it was important to send the message that Chula Vista needed a change, and that Cheryl Cox was the better candidate.

In Imperial Beach Mayor Elect Jim Janney was David versus Goliath as he emerged victorious over an opponent who spent over \$400 per vote received. PSAR's Board of Directors voted to endorse Janney, and the Board of REALTORS® Political Action Committee (BORPAC) voted to support Mr. Janney with a BORPAC check of \$3,000. This small contribution was enough to help him get his message out against an opponent who spent well over \$200,000 smashing all spending records in this small beach town.

Supporting the REALTOR® Action Fund with a small \$49 contribution at dues time can help you make a difference. Don't force your fellow REALTOR® to shoulder the entire burden. When you pay your dues, do your part and contribute.

Did you know that over 30% of all proposed legislation introduced in Sacramento each year impacts REALTORS®? That amounts to over one thousand bills each year, most of which affect REALTORS® liability. Last year, C.A.R.'s legislative advocacy saved each REALTOR® over \$13,000. At the local level, there are many issues that directly affect REALTORS® and their clients, including zoning rules, tree ordinances, sign laws, business license fees, and point-of-sale mandates.

Next year we must continue our efforts to block the unfair application of business license taxes on real estate agents, protect the mortgage interest deduction, keep banks out of real estate, defend our business model from the an unfair Justice Department lawsuit, and stay on top of many state and local issues.

Member contributions to the REALTOR® Action fund are critical to the political advocacy necessary to defend the interests of REALTORS®, homeowners and property rights locally, in Sacramento, and in Washington, D.C.