

March 2008

The Business of Politics

NAR has worked closely with the 110th Congress, appearing before House and Senate committees on 17 occasions to communicate [REALTOR® positions on major issues](#). On the regulatory front, NAR worked closely with the Executive Branch submitting 14 policy comment letters providing REALTOR® recommendations regarding federal regulations affecting the real estate industry. These formal meetings were in addition to daily contact between your staff and key Congressional and regulatory agency staff members across Washington, D.C.

While [NAR achieved significant success during 2007](#) in the House of Representatives, the United States Senate has left a full agenda of unfinished business for 2008 including: [FHA reform](#), [Freddie Mac/Fannie Mae Reform](#), [Banks in Real Estate](#), [Flood Insurance Program Reauthorization](#), [Property Insurance](#), [Small Business Health Coverage](#), [Appraisal/Mortgage Reform \(anti-predatory lending\)](#)

[FHA reform](#) continues to move forward as the House and Senate Conference Committee negotiate to reconcile the differences contained in the versions passed by each chamber. [Senate Banking Chairman Chris Dodd \(D-Conn.\)](#) has indicated the bill would be finished in the coming weeks. This reform legislation would permanently increase loan limits, the increased loan limits created by the Economic Stimulus Package will expire December 31, 2008 if the reform bill is not passed.

[Freddie Mac/Fannie Mae Reform](#) would also enact permanent conforming loan limit increases as well as creating a more powerful oversight entity to monitor the soundness and security of the two Government Sponsored Enterprises. [The House of Representatives sent H.R. 1427](#) to the United States Senate on May 24, 2007 where it still is awaiting action.

[Banks in Real Estate](#) NAR achieved a major victory in the continuing fight to keep national banking conglomerates out of the real estate brokerage and property management business by securing a two-year moratorium on banks in real estate. NAR is continuing to press for a permanent solution to the long-running battle through the [Community Choice in Real Estate Act, H.R. 111](#). The bill currently has 269 cosponsors.

[National Flood Insurance Program Reauthorization \(NFIP\)](#) the House of Representatives and Senate have passed NFIP reform bills. Because of the significant differences between H.R. 3121 and S. 2284, a reconciled bill must be passed by a House-Senate Conference Committee. In order for the NFIP to be reauthorized by Congress, a bill must be presented to President Bush for signature into law, on or before September 30, 2008.

[Property Insurance](#) maintaining access to affordable property insurance is critical for every real estate transaction in the country. High cost insurance is forcing people out of their homes or limiting home purchase options. NAR is committed to working with Congress to keep insurance available and affordable. A natural disaster bill has passed the House and awaits Senate action.

[Small Business Health Coverage](#) NAR will continue to raise the importance of passage of legislation to correct the inequities in the nation's health insurance delivery system and work with the House and Senate to introduce legislation for consideration.

[Appraisal/Mortgage Reform \(anti-predatory lending\)](#) the subprime mortgage crisis is not entirely the result of bad underwriting decisions, more and more evidence of predatory lending practices have generated a call for new lending guidelines. On November 15, 2007, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 3915, the "Mortgage Reform and Anti-Predatory Lending Act of 2007." NAR, working with Congressional allies, scored a major victory by amending the legislation to **exempt persons** only engaged in **real estate activities** from a **national licensing registry** for mortgage loan originators.