**REALTOR® Party Political Survival Initiative**

**Talking Points**

***Why Did NAR Create the REALTOR® Party Political Survival Initiative***

* In January of 2010, the Supreme Court ruled in the case of Citizens United vs. the Federal Election Commission.
  + The ruling states that corporate dollars – so-called soft dollars -- can be used to fund independent expenditure campaigns.
* This not only changes the way elections are financed at the national level, but it also overturns rulings that only allowed hard-dollars – those funds specifically allocated for political purposes – to be used in 23 states.
  + This means political fundraising as we have known it for the past 100 years just shifted dramatically.
  + Corporate funds/dues can now be used to shape opinions about candidates in ALL 50 states
* It is a game changer of gigantic proportions.
  + It is as if the goal posts on a 100 yard football field were expanded to now cover 140 yards.
* In order for “The Voice for Real Estate” to have the impact it has had for the past 100 years in terms of political advocacy, the REALTOR® organization is stepping up its game.
  + No one has spoken with more power or as passionately about protecting private property rights and fighting for opening the door to the American Dream of Home Ownership than the REALTOR® Family.
* To maintain and grow our political power in this new landscape, NAR launched the REALTOR® Party Political Survival Initiative.
  + The REALTOR® Party Political Survival Initiative did not just happen overnight.

What does the REALTOR® Party Political Survival Initiative mean for members?

* The proposal is for a dedicated dues increase of $40.00 for each of the remaining years of the current budget.
  + There are two remaining years in the current budget cycle.
  + The increase would take effect in the 2012 budget year.
  + Because it is “dedicated” to this initiative, it would be used exclusively to fund political advocacy efforts.

After two years, the initiative will be re-examined for quantifiable results…

* NAR has already contributed funds to this initiative out of its operating budget.
  + But it’s not enough to undertake the initiative at a level that would give it a best chance for success, so additional funding is needed.
  + The increased dollars will be dedicated solely to advocacy purposes as outlined by the Political Survival Initiative.
  + If this is dues increase is approved, 50% of NAR budget would be devoted to political advocacy, which consistently ranks among members as the #1 benefit they receive from NAR.

What are the benefits of the Political Survival Initiative?

* The most powerful benefit is it will keep the REALTOR® organization as one of the most influential advocacy groups in America.
  + There are monumental issues coming down the pike that will affect members in their daily businesses, such as the future of mortgage finance and keeping housing affordable in America.
  + We must have the power to shape this pivotal moment for the American Dream of Home Ownership.
* Most importantly, these dollars will be available to state associations and local boards.
  + 2/3rds of the dollars raised will be returned back to states to be used in support of local candidates and issue campaigns, and for other political advocacy needs -- to help shape the opinions of candidates on real estate-related issues as they work their way up as elected leaders.
  + It will combine NAR funds with state/local funds to increase our political power
  + It will create early relationships with state and local lawmakers/policymakers
  + It will shape the political make-up of state or local governing bodies
* NAR President Ron Phipps often comments that “now is our time.”
  + With this initiative, REALTORS® are seizing the moment for home ownership.
  + We are doing this NOT ONLY because of the Citizens Supreme Court decision, but because our core competency is our grass roots advocacy; it’s where we need to be investing today so our future advocacy efforts will be successful tomorrow.
  + We need to be grooming our "REALTOR® Champions" at the state / local levels now, before some of them progress to become elected leaders at the federal level.
* The political press in Washington has already noted the emerging clout of the REALTOR® Party.
  + A recent article in Politico said: “REALTORS®… are going to want to be politically effective, and a large measure of their influence is that they are present everywhere.”
* Now is our time to seize the day.