



NEWS YOU CAN USE *May 2018*

NEWS

[NAR Marks 50th Anniversary of Fair Housing Act](#)

NAR is marking the 50th anniversary of the Fair Housing Act today as part of a yearlong commemoration of the landmark law that was enacted on April 11, 1968. NAR is also recognizing April as [Fair Housing Month](#), and has released the [first video](#) in a new series, Fair Housing Focus, that walks through the events leading to the passage of the act.

[RPR® Sees Record Usage](#)

Overall engagement on Realtors Property Resource® (RPR®) soared during the first quarter, with the number of web sessions topping 3.7 million, a 27.7 percent increase over the same period in 2017. More than 18,000 REALTORS® signed up to use the platform during the first three months of 2018. [More](#).

[Watch for Possible Phishing Attempt](#)

If you receive an email claiming to be from “REALTOR® Party via DocuSign,” be aware that it is not from NAR. Do not open any attachments or click any of the links, which may ask for passwords. If you’ve opened the email and entered your DocuSign credentials, you should log in to DocuSign and change your password immediately. [More](#).

[Panelists: MLSs Fuel Competition in Real Estate](#)

Real estate stands apart from other sectors of the economy because it is built on a model that is facilitated by multiple listing services (MLSs), which encourages competing businesses to work together, former NAR associate general counsel Ralph Holmen said last week during a [panel session](#) in Washington, D.C. NAR commissioned a [report](#) by an independent economist to help show how MLSs promote competition between real estate brokers, to the ultimate benefit of consumers.

[Is Your Area Still Eligible for Rural Loans?](#)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has reassessed which areas are considered rural for several assistance programs, including federally backed loans from the Rural Housing Service. The latest [Voice for Real Estate](#) walks you through how

to check if your area's status has changed. Other stories in the video: Small changes by the federal government make it easier for homeowners to get private flood insurance, a technology symposium makes clear all types of real estate brokerage models are competitive today, and brokers share success tips at the recent Broker Summit.

[RPR® Gets New Chief](#)

Jeff Young will [head up](#) the Realtors Property Resource®, or RPR®, starting May 1 as the company's COO/General Manager, taking over for founding CEO Dale Ross, who is retiring.

[Privacy Rule Impacts Associations, Brokerages](#)

How brokerages, MLSs, and your association are impacted by a European Union data-privacy rule taking effect is explored in a Facebook Live event that was held on April 24. NAR Senior Counsel Finley Maxson and NAR Vice President of Information Technology Liz Sturrock talked about the rule, called the General Data Protection Regulation, or GDPR, and answered people's questions. Watch the [recorded version](#) on YouTube.

[Consumer Interest Trends Toward Sustainability](#)

Amid rising demand for green and sustainable home features among consumers, REALTORS® continue to work to promote environmentally responsible features and business practices, according to [NAR's REALTORS® and Sustainability 2018 report](#).

[7 Tech Companies in 2018 REach Class](#)

NAR's strategic investment arm, Second Century Ventures, will work with seven companies that show promise in the real estate industry as part of its REach accelerator program. The companies offer an automated email platform, local marketing system, compliance checklist, transaction management system, income-goal tracking program, lead routing app, and transaction coordination platform, [Learn about the companies](#).

[2018 REALTORS® Conference & Expo Registration Open](#)

Register for the 2018 REALTORS® Conference & Expo, November 2-5, in Boston. It's the place for them to take their businesses to the next level, featuring 100 top-notch education sessions, 400 exhibitors at the largest industry trade show and 20,000 REALTORS® and guests to network and idea-share with. [Learn more](#).

[Excused Absences for Upcoming BOD Meeting](#)

All absence requests for the Board of Directors meeting at the 2018 REALTORS® Legislative Meetings in Washington this month must be submitted to NAR by 4 p.m. on Friday, May 18. Directors must be listed on the roster to vote at the meeting on May 19. To confirm your 2018 directors, go to [Committee and Director Appointments](#) on nar.realtor and view Board of Directors

Appointments by name and state. To submit changes, or for more information, contact [Julie Finney](#), 312-329-8333.

UPDATES

[Agencies Raise Commercial Appraisal Threshold](#)

Federal regulators have issued a final rule that increases the appraisal threshold for federally related commercial real estate transactions, which was last raised in 1994, from \$250,000 to \$500,000. Commercial transactions that do not meet the new threshold must still obtain an evaluation of the real property that is consistent with safe and sound banking practices. [More](#).

[CFPB Asks for Feedback on Education Programs](#)

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) is asking people to provide information as part of an examination by the agency of its consumer financial education programs, including the topics they cover and how they are delivered. The request is part the CFPB's ongoing effort to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of its operations. [Details](#).

[FHFA Report Examines Appraisals](#)

The Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA) has published a report that compares appraisals from appraisal management companies (AMCs) with those from other sources. The report found that both types of appraisals have similar levels of overvaluation, but that those from AMCs tend to be more prone to contract price confirmation and super-overvaluation (above 6 percent). [More](#).

[Two-year Goal for Infrastructure Approvals](#)

Infrastructure proposals would be approved in two years or less under goals agreed to by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Transportation, EPA, and other federal agencies in an effort to speed [infrastructure revitalization](#).

[Don't Waive Commercial Appraisals in Nashville](#)

NAR recommends the Appraisal Subcommittee [not waive appraisal requirements](#) for federally connected commercial transactions in the Nashville area as requested by Tri-Star Bank, because the bank's request did not meet baseline requirements showing the waiver is needed.

[Voice for Real Estate: Competitiveness](#)

MLSs help residential real estate remain highly competitive even as technological changes affect the industry, participants earlier this month said during a panel on real estate competitiveness in Washington. The panel is a top story in the latest [Voice for Real Estate](#) news video. Also covered are recent changes to the Rural Housing Service's map of rural areas, ways the federal government is encouraging more private flood insurers, and the Broker Summit in Nashville earlier this month.

[NAR Meets with EPA on Lead Exposure](#)

NAR, along with a broad stakeholder coalition, recently met with the director of an Environmental Protection Agency-led effort to develop a strategy to reduce lead exposure among children. [More](#).

[New Rural Housing Service Administrator Named](#)

The Trump administration has appointed real estate finance veteran Joel Baxley as administrator of the Rural Housing Service. [Details](#).

[CFPB Seeks Comments on Complaint Process](#)

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) is asking people to provide feedback on how the agency handles consumer complaints and inquiries. The request is part of the CFPB's ongoing effort to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of its operations. [Details](#).

[Allow More Seller Financing, NAR Says](#)

A seller that provides financing for five or fewer properties a year wouldn't be considered a loan originator under [NAR-backed legislation](#). Right now a seller can only provide financing for three properties a year before being considered a loan originator. The legislation is called "Preserving Access to Rural Installment Transactions for Years (PARITY) Act of 2018," H.R. 5287.

[DOT Making \\$1.5 B Available for Local Projects](#)

Local governments have [two and a half years](#) to apply with the U.S. Department of Transportation to develop or improve transportation projects using BUILD grants, which used to be called TIGER grants.

[Change CFPB to Commission Structure, NAR Says](#)

NAR joined other groups to [support](#) replacing the director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau with a bipartisan, multi-person commission.

RESOURCES

[Complete Code of Ethics Training](#)

Create an action plan to complete your NAR Code of Ethics Training requirement before the current two-year cycle expires on Dec. 31. In many states, REALTORS® can earn three hours of CE credit while fulfilling their ethics requirement with NAR's online training course. [Learn more](#).

[Explore Commercial Tech Guide for Discounts](#)

There are now more than 25 companies with commercial-centric products and tools on NAR's Commercial Data and Listings Resources page—and nearly half offer exclusive discounts. [Learn more](#).

[Supply, Affordability at Odds](#)

Housing affordability is down from a year ago and fewer households can afford homes for sale based on their income, [a joint report](#) from NAR and [realtor.com](#) finds.

[Sign Fair Housing Poster](#)

Pledge your commitment to Fair Housing by signing poster in the lobby of the Marriott Wardman Park in Washington as part of the REALTORS® Legislative Meetings & Trade Expo next month. [More](#) on NAR's year-long recognition of the Fair Housing Act.

[Global Councils Share Winning Ideas](#)

Get ideas for boosting your global programs from Global Business Councils that have won [2018 Diamond and Platinum awards](#) from NAR.

[Planning a Vacation?](#)

[Save money](#) on your next trip with member discounts on car rentals with REALTOR Benefits® Program partners Avis®, Budget® and Hertz® when you use the relevant partner discount codes. Don't forget to add coupon codes for even more savings, and check-out the options for upgrading to a luxury vehicle

[Stand with Fair Housing at Legislative Meetings](#)

During the REALTORS® Legislative Meetings & Trade Expo in May, reaffirm your pledge to Article 10 of the Code of Ethics, which states that REALTORS® should not discriminate against any person, by signing the poster at the Fair Housing Act display in the lobby of the Marriott Wardman Park. [Learn more](#) about the commemoration.

[MLS of Choice Webinar](#)

Join CMLS and NAR on May 1 for a free webinar to learn what you can do to implement MLS of Choice. Learn from a panel of experts, including CMLS members who are already thriving under the MLS of Choice standards. [Register](#).

[2018 RCE and Self-Study Updates on Sale](#)

The 2018 updates to REALTOR association management [self-study courses](#) and [The Answer Book](#), which is the main reference for the self-study courses and the RCE exam, are now available. All updates are based on the 2018 update to the [AE Competencies and RCE Body of Knowledge](#), which is also now available. The Advanced REALTOR® Association Management course is on sale for \$120 (\$150 value) and worth 75 points on the [RCE Applicant Data Form \(ADF\)](#), and the Professional Standards course is on sale for \$60 (\$75 value) and worth 20 points on the ADF. All of the self-study courses satisfy required professional development hours for Core Standards. Questions? Contact [Renee Holland](#).

[Save on Diversity Certification with MVP Deal](#)

For a limited time, members save \$75 on the application fee when they take NAR's At Home With Diversity certification course in Spanish. This MVP promotion will end on April 30. Help us spread the word, then take this course yourself. [Click here](#) to take advantage.

[Visit the REALTORS® Trade Expo Before & After Capitol Hill Visits](#)

If you are attending the REALTORS® Legislative Meetings in a few weeks, make sure to stop by the REALTORS® Trade Expo before and after your Capitol Hill visit on May 16. NAR will be providing free Metro cards and maps between 10:00am and 2:00pm to help you get to Capitol Hill (while supplies last), and there will be a Cocktail Reception on the show floor from 5:00pm to 6:00pm afterwards. [Learn more](#)

[April Housing Minute: Modest Gains](#)

Existing-home sales and contract signings saw modest gains in March, even as low supply and higher mortgage rates continued to affect overall affordability. The trend is summarized in the latest Housing Minute graphics [video](#).

[RPR® Smart Charts Use Visuals to Tell Property's Story](#)

A [new eBook series](#) from RPR® uses charts and graphs to help you share with consumers what's going on in their market and what's unique about a property.

[5 Steps to Grow Your Business With a CRM](#)

Wondering how to grow your business and fill your client pipeline? Join this Ixact sponsor webinar on May 22 at 1 p.m., Eastern Time, to see specific, real-world examples of how a real estate CRM system can make it easy to keep in touch and stay on task with all your properties, customers, and referral sources. [Register](#).

LEGAL

[Challenge to MLS Access Dismissed](#)

In case you missed it: A federal court Michigan has found that it is reasonable for a multiple listing service to require membership in a shareholder REALTOR® association to parties wishing to list properties. [More](#).

[HUD, DOJ Target Harassment in Housing](#)

The U.S. Department of Justice and HUD announced a [joint initiative](#) to combat sexual harassment in housing. The initiative will involve data sharing and analysis, training, public outreach, federal policies, and issues related to public housing. A DOJ pilot program launched last year resulted in an increase in harassment reports, DOJ said.

[Agency Structure Violates Antitrust Law](#)

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has determined that measures taken by the state of Louisiana to supervise its real estate appraisal board in response to an FTC complaint about the board's market power were insufficient. [More](#).

[Voice for Real Estate: EU Privacy Rule, AMCs](#)

A live webcast NAR hosted last week on a European Union data privacy rule is excerpted in the latest [Voice for Real Estate](#). The rule could impact how you and your members manage data even if you don't seek out online traffic from Europe. Also covered in the video: An upcoming town hall on what NAR would like your members to talk about when they meet with their members of Congress during the Legislative Meetings later this month, whether appraisals ordered by appraisal management companies come out higher than other appraisals, and an inter-agency effort by the federal government to speed environmental reviews for infrastructure projects.