

News Release



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
REALTORS[®]

The Voice for Real Estate[®]

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES AND US CONFERENCE OF MAYORS BECOME PARTNERS IN NAR'S HOUSING OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM

NEW ORLEANS, LA (November 7, 2002)--The National Association of Counties and the US Conference of Mayors today signed letters of agreement with the National Association of Realtors[®] to become partners in the Realtors[®] new Housing Opportunity Program designed to improve the availability of housing opportunities for all Americans.

The agreement with the US Conference of Mayors calls for a dialogue between national real estate leaders and the nation's mayors including key federal legislative issues, areas of cooperation on the local level to promote investment and affordable housing opportunities for rental and homeownership in urban communities and neighborhoods and to create "best practices" on how local Realtors[®] and mayors have cooperated.

Mayor Patrick Henry Hays of North Little Rock, ARK, a trustee of USCM, signed the agreement at 2002 Realtors Conference and Expo, which opened yesterday.

The partnership with the National Association of Counties commits the organization to work with NAR to achieve common objectives, beginning with the Housing Opportunity Program. Both organizations will encourage their members to reach out to each other. The National Association of Counties gave their commitment to the partnership through a letter to NAR from its President, Dallas County, TX Commissioner Kenneth A. Mayfield.

"These partnerships establish a working relationship between Realtors and the nation's mayors and county officials around the common goal of creating more housing for both rental and ownership markets. These national partnerships open the doors for Realtors and local Realtor boards and associations to work directly with their municipal and county officials. The agreements are a tremendous endorsement of our effort and a great way to kick off the new Housing Opportunity Program," said Martin Edwards, Jr., a partner in Colliers Wilkinson & Snowden Inc. of Memphis, Tenn.

NAR's Housing Opportunity Program, launched at the 2002 Realtors[®] Conference and Expo, will equip Realtors[®] with tools they can use, including training, research, communications activities and opportunities to work in coalition with allied interests.

The program's centerpiece is a living web site (www.realtor.org/housingopportunity) that highlights successful affordable housing opportunity programs, provides tools, and shares a wealth of resources that Realtors[®] and others can use to help promote housing opportunities in their communities.

In addition to the web site, the program includes:

- Research to help Realtors[®] and policymakers better understand housing concerns in their communities. Two research studies sponsored by the program, one on affordable housing in New Orleans and another on the impact of Federally assisted housing programs on neighboring residential values, were released at the conference;
- Training and business development to educate Realtors[®] about the importance of counseling consumers about the full range of housing options and to introduce Realtors[®] to business opportunities in affordable housing;
- Coalition building activities at the national, state and local levels to develop and advocate new approaches that make housing more affordable;
- Advocacy to promote a safe, healthy and affordable housing and viable housing finance options; and
- Communication activities to encourage housing interests and policymakers to work together to find effective solutions.

The National Association of Realtors[®], “The Voice for Real Estate,” is America’s largest trade association, representing more than 800,000 members involved in all aspects of the residential and commercial real estate industries.

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Information about NAR is available at <http://www.realtor.org>. This and other news releases are posted in the Web site’s “News Release” section.