



Government affairs update for the week of December 8, 2024

Why and How Bay East is Involved in Politics?

On Monday, December 9, the *New York Times* published an article critical of the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) political activities. NAR, the California Association of REALTORS® (C.A.R.) and Bay East are all involved in politics. The following FAQs share why and how Bay East political activities are a member benefit.

Why is Bay East involved in politics? The process of buying and selling real estate and being a homeowner or a rental housing provider is highly regulated by the federal, state, and local governments. NAR is actively involved advocating on behalf of the profession, homeowners, buyers, and sellers at the federal level. C.A.R. does the same at the state level. Bay East is the voice for real estate professionals, buyers, sellers, and owners locally.

Local governments have a direct impact on many of the steps in a real estate transaction. Local governments directly impact homeowners through their zoning ordinances, providing public education, and protecting health and safety. While some interest groups and trade associations may weigh in on one or two local public policies, Bay East tracks a variety of local and regional issues and works hard to make sure the REALTOR® and homeowner, buyer, and seller perspectives are understood by local elected leaders and city staff.

Bay East advocacy is a member benefit because it simultaneously helps members better understand the communities where they work, provides opportunities for them to get involved in local political and policy-making activities, and it helps them succeed as real estate professionals by working to ensure local government involvement in real estate helps rather than hurts.

How is Bay East involved in politics? Members of the Local Government Relations and Political Activities committees meet with candidates for regional and local offices prior to each election so they can understand the important role homeownership and real estate transactions play in local economies and the quality of life in their communities. Bay East endorses and supports local candidates who share the Bay East perspective on important issues ranging from public safety, to transportation, to creating and maintaining housing opportunities.

Bay East is actively involved in specific issues, as well. Bay East members and staff meet with elected officials and government staff, attend meetings, and testify at public hearings. If needed, Bay East will conduct advocacy campaigns that include mobilizing Bay East members and the public.

What does Bay East believe? The Bay East [Housing and Public Policy Statement](#) includes more than a dozen policy positions on issues including affordable housing, education, Fair Housing, municipal finance, public safety, residential and real estate transactions. These policy positions are reviewed and updated on a regular basis by the Bay East Local Government Relations committees and the Board of Directors which consists of real estate professionals from throughout Alameda County.

Who decides which candidates Bay East supports and endorses? Bay East REALTOR® members are at the center of all decisions regarding candidate and issue endorsement and support. The Political Activities Committee interviews candidates and makes a recommendation to the Board of Directors regarding which candidates' campaigns should be endorsed by Bay East. The final decisions are made by the Bay East Board of Directors.

Do Bay East members know about these political activities? Bay East advocacy activities are promoted to all Bay East members on a regular basis. All new Bay East members learn about Bay East political activities during their new member orientation session. Information about government involvement in real estate transactions and Bay East political activities is shared with all members via the Government Affairs Weekly Report email newsletter. During each election cycle, Bay East shares its voter guide with all members.

How does political party affiliation factor into Bay East candidate and issue support? All Bay East political activities are limited to local and regional issues and are, by default, non-partisan. Party affiliation is not part of the decision-making process when Bay East is considering supporting or endorsing a candidate or an issue.

If you have any questions about why and how Bay East is involved in politics, or if you want to get involved, please contact [David Stark](#).

If you have any questions about Bay East advocacy activities or any government-related real estate issues you want Bay East to research, contact [David Stark](#), Bay East Chief Public Affairs and Communications Officer.
