



Government Affairs Action for the week of December 29, 2019

by David Stark, Public Affairs Director, Bay East Association of REALTORS®

Government Affairs and Advocacy Year in Review

2019 was a busy year for government involvement in real estate transactions, home ownership and private property rights. In addition to federal and state issues, such as the National Flood Insurance Program and AB 1482, there were a host of local and regional government activity keeping Bay East busy throughout the year.

January

Government Shutdown: The Federal government shutdown that started at the end of 2018 and continued into 2019 hit home ownership hard. Thanks to input from REALTORS® across the nation, the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) convinced the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to kick-start the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) to issue and renew policies. Meanwhile, IRS could not provide tax-related information such as Form 4506T which some lenders require.

February

Hayward Tenant Protection: The Hayward City Council started working on new rental housing policies including: mandatory mediation with binding arbitration between the landlord and tenant; ending the vacancy decontrol process; just-cause for eviction and requiring all landlords to notify the City of Hayward when increasing rent or evicting a tenant.

March

Hayward Emergency Rental Ordinance: The Hayward City Council adopted an emergency ordinance requiring landlords to show a "just cause" for evicting a tenant. The requirement applied to all rental housing in Hayward including single-family homes and condominiums.

Bay East in RPAC Hall of Fame: Two Bay East leaders were among the inductees into the 2018 National Association of REALTORS® RPAC Hall of Fame. Kevin Brown, a Bay East member and the 2014 C.A.R. president, and Tricia Thomas, Bay East Chief Executive Officer, were both recognized for their contributions to the REALTOR® Action Fund.

April

San Leandro Short-Term Rentals: The San Leandro City Council began studying short-term rentals. In May, they banned non-hosted short-term rentals but allowed short-term rentals if the property owner lives on-site during a guest's stay.

May

Legislative Day: More than 100 Bay East members participated in the California Association of REALTORS® (C.A.R.) 2019 Legislative Day. The Bay East contingent met with Senator Bob Wieckowski and Assembly members Rob Bonta, Rebecca Bauer-Kahan and staff from Assembly member Bill Quirk's office. Hot issues included support for a tax

credit for low and moderate-income first-time home buyers and opposition to forcing rental property owners to accept all government housing subsidy programs including Section 8. Each of these bills will have an immediate impact on home ownership, housing affordability and private property rights.

Fremont Sign Issues: The City of Fremont began studying harsher penalties for real estate open house sign ordinance violators. The City Council directed staff to evaluate increasing fines, expanding collection of illegally-placed signs and using litigation to motivate agents and brokers to comply with the sign ordinance.

June

Hayward Rental Rules: The Hayward City Council approved new rules for all rental housing units that included requiring landlords to file rent increase notices and eviction notices; a mandatory landlord-tenant mediation program and "just cause" for evicting a tenant.

July

Summer Breather: July was the only "quiet" month for government affairs and advocacy issues during 2019.

August

FHA Condo Rules Unveiled: FHA announced extending certifications for condominium complexes to three years; allowing for "spot" approvals and lowering the percentage of owner-occupants in a condominium complex.

September

State-Wide Rent Control Threat: C.A.R. issued a Red Alert opposing AB 1482 because it would establish a state-wide rent cap and require all rental property owners to have a "just-cause" for evicting a tenant. Governor Newsom would sign the bill into law during October.

October

Condo Rules Go Live: New FHA rules went into effect making it easier to purchase condominiums: Single Unit Approval "Spot Loans," lower owner-occupancy and the complex re-certification period was increased from two to three years.

November

Flood Insurance Extension: The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) set to expire on November 21 was extended to December 20. NAR worked with Congress to secure long-term NFIP funding and improvements including better flood maps.

December

Good News from Washington DC: Three federal home ownership programs were extended into 2020. Congress and President Trump approved funding for the National Flood Insurance Program, the Terrorism Risk Insurance Program and a suite of tax breaks for home owners.

If you have any questions or any government-related real estate issues you want Bay East to research, please contact Bay East staff at davids@bayeast.org or visit the Bay East offices at 7021 Koll Center Parkway, Pleasanton CA 94566.
