

Oct. 28, 2009

Texas Realtors – working for you

Did you ever ask yourself what the difference is between a real estate agent and a Texas Realtor? Did you even know that there was a difference?

Well, there is, and it's a difference that matters. Let me explain.

Is that agent a Texas Realtor?

In Texas, there are a number of prerequisites to complete for a person to obtain a real estate license, including meeting minimum education standards and passing an exam. But that is where the similarities end.

Once a person is issued a real estate license, that agent may choose to join the local Realtor association. In Texas, joining the local association gives the broker or salesperson membership in the largest professional-member association in the state, the Texas Association of Realtors, as well as the world's largest professional-member association, the National Association of Realtors (NAR). Only after joining the association and committing to continuing education, integrity and professionalism does a licensed agent become a Texas Realtor. And your Realtor's membership in these prominent organizations gives you, the consumer, added perks.

Unlike licensed real estate agents who do not join the Realtor association, members of these associations volunteer to adhere to a strict Code of Ethics. These standards of conduct exceed the state's requirements, guaranteeing you consumer protections and accountability as well as an avenue for ethical complaints, should they arise.

In addition, many Texas Realtors carry one or more professional designations. These accreditations indicate intensive or enriched training in the real estate industry. The designations are signaled by letters following the holder's name, giving you the opportunity to choose a Texas Realtor who perfectly complements your specific needs.

Fighting for you

An important but often overlooked perk to working with Texas Realtors is our commitment to consumers. We are involved in the political process at all levels, promoting policies and supporting candidates who advocate property rights and homeownership across the state. In this year's 81st legislative session, Texas Realtors lobbied elected officials and spoke with regulatory agencies on behalf of Texas homeowners.

Additionally, we again opposed a real estate transfer tax that would have added to the cost of all home purchases and priced thousands of Texans out of the housing market. All efforts to pass a transfer tax failed.

Get out and vote

This year, Texas Realtors are asking Texans to vote for Props 2, 3, 5 and 11. Proposition 2, 3 and 5 seek to put us on the road to a fair and equitable property appraisal system. Proposition 11 aims to limit the power of eminent domain.

Don't settle

Buying or selling a home is one of the most important financial transactions you will make in your lifetime. Make sure you choose someone who will serve your interests. Texas Realtors help consumers buy and sell real estate, but we are also staunch defenders of private-property rights, supporting legislative changes that promote positive outcomes for Texas property owners.

For more information I encourage you to visit TexasRealEstate.com-the online source for consumer-friendly information about real estate in the Lone Star State; or to search for a Texas REALTOR® in the New Braunfels/Canyon Lake area visit www.nbcirealtors.org