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March 12, 2018

Dear GPAR Member,

I hope this message finds you and your business doing well. I write to you about the City of Philadelphia's FY2019 budget proposal and our positions on it.

Where does the Association stand on proposed budget?

Philadelphia's Mayor and City Council are now considering a budget proposal that will have a profound and adverse impact on our industry. The Greater Philadelphia Association of REALTORS® (GPAR) strongly opposes the proposed fifth real estate tax increase in less than 10 years and a second increase to the real estate transfer tax in as many years. We support efforts to ensure good childhood education and city services. However, it is simply unfair to ask property owners to once again bear financial the burden. Policymakers need to implement a sound fiscal plan, go after those who evade paying taxes, avoid barriers to homeownership, continue wage tax reductions and preserve programs that generate long-term revenue. We need to advance policies that drive Philadelphia forward as a place to live and conduct business.

GPAR is launching a robust strategy to advance our positions. We've begun our advocacy efforts with city councilmembers on behalf of our members, current and future private property owners. Part of the plan includes assistance from our members.

What can GPAR members do?

We ask that you help as an advocate for our positions. We ask that you talk to your colleagues, friends and families about where we stand and encourage them to also become advocates. And, finally, when we initiate a Call-For-Action, we ask for you to respond to it.

What are the GPAR budget talking points on the proposed budget?

- We oppose the proposed fifth property tax increase in less than 10 years.
- We oppose the proposed a second increase to the real estate transfer tax in as many years.
- We support the Mayor and City Council in their efforts to ensure our children receive a good education and our citizens get good services.
- The City needs to implement a sound fiscal plan, one that doesn't look for tax increases by default and finds actual cost saving measures.
- We support collecting delinquent taxes and the proposed securitization legislation introduced by Councilman-at-Large Allan Domb.

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In closing, it's important to remember that as REALTORS® we advocate for the rights of homeowners, support measures that promote or enable homeownership and oppose measures that interfere with these objectives. GPAR believes the budget under consideration in City Hall is harmful to our goals and we ask our city policymakers to consider a more fiscally responsible budget approach.

Thank you for your consideration of the thoughts expressed here and for being a member of GPAR.

Joseph Rey
President

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