

# LEGAL YEAR IN REVIEW

2020 was a year full of unprecedented challenges and we stepped up to meet them. Our advocacy touched nearly every aspect of practice, to keep REALTORS® healthy, working, and housed. We were a constant resource from programs, to Legal Hotline Questions, to new forms, we worked to educate members on the latest developments in an ever-changing landscape. None of this is possible without our members, from continuing to support the REALTORS® Political Action Committee through a challenging year, to engaging with our Government Affairs Committee and the legislative process, you are the key to these successes.

Thank you for all you do and we look forward to a great 2021!

LEGAL	ADVOCACY	REALTOR® PARTY
<p><b>1,575</b> Legal Hotlines answered (almost double our 2019 total)</p> <hr/> <p><b>60</b> presentations (1,000+ attendees)</p> <hr/> <p> <b>11 new forms</b> and <b>6 modifications</b> (triple our 2019 total, many resolved pandemic-related practice challenges)</p>	<p> <b>55 bills</b> 5 hearings</p> <hr/> <p><b>24 local issues</b> in 21 communities</p> <hr/> <p><b>\$107,000</b> funded key initiatives</p> <hr/> <p><b>6 policies</b> addressed COVID-19 challenges</p>	<p> <b>\$402,163</b> invested</p> <hr/> <p><b>\$22,400</b> supported 61 REALTOR® champions</p> <hr/> <p> <b>\$5,325</b> in Direct Giver contributions</p>
		



## 2020 HIGHLIGHTS



### COVID-19 POLICIES

When a state of emergency was declared in mid-March, the MAR Legal team went to work for you, advocating on almost every real estate related policy to make sure you stayed healthy, working, and housed. Here are some examples of our successes:

- Real Estate Declared Essential
- License Renewal Extension
- Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Inspection Deferrals
- Remote Online Notarization
- Mortgage Forbearance
- Safety Net - Including low interest loans and unemployment assistance for independent contractors

### LOCAL ADVOCACY PROGRAM

In late 2020, MAR started its local advocacy program, assisting local associations in local legislative and regulatory issues. Despite only being in operation for a few months, there was no shortage of work with **24 issues covered in 21 communities**. Most notably, working with the North Shore Association of REALTORS®, we succeeded in preventing a proposed development moratorium in the town of Ipswich that would have stopped new multifamily development for two years. The vote took place one day after Wicked Local Ipswich ran an op-ed opposing the matter, drafted with MAR assistance and signed by NSR leaders.

### MEDIATION SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Thanks to the work of our Government Affairs Committee, we created a **first-in-the-nation mediation scholarship program**. This program funds scholarships for members to receive training and mentorship in mediation, allowing them to serve as volunteer dispute and court mediators at a time of potentially heightened need, due to a predicted increase in eviction case filings. We received over 100 applications, in a strong demonstration of members' desire to serve their communities.

### ZONING REFORMS TO INCREASE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

The economic development bill included **Housing Choice zoning reforms**, one of MAR's top legislative priorities of the past several years. It will promote desperately needed development and help increase housing stock in Massachusetts. The legislation will enable cities and towns to adopt certain zoning best practices related to housing development by a simple majority vote, rather than the current two-thirds supermajority. This will make it easier for municipalities to rezone for denser, transit- or downtown-oriented, new housing development.

