



TRANSCRIPT

5 IN 5 – 2/11/19

Thank you for watching CTR TV. I'm Kristi Olds with your five in five. Get up to speed on five topics in five minutes.

TOPIC 1 – 2020 DUES INCREASE & DISCOUNT

CTR wants to make all members aware of an increase to their state association dues for 2020, however there will be opportunities throughout this year for you to get a dues discount. The CTR Board of Directors approved a 100-dollar dues increase effective next year. Members can get a 100-dollar discount on their 2020 dues if they fulfill certain criteria approved by the CTR Executive Committee. One way to get the discount is to respond to any CTR Call for Action by September 1st of this year. Those opportunities will be coming very soon because the legislature is considering several proposals that would be detrimental to Connecticut real estate. Responding to an electronic call for action takes only minutes.

Diane McAdams: *It's extremely easy to participate in a call for action and it's very important to our business. Many things are on the line this year. It's very easy to do, just click, click, send.*

Carol Christiansen: *You just open it up. It has your information filled in for you. It says who your legislators are and who it's going to send it to. There's already a prewritten message so all you have to do is click that you agree to send this to your legislator and send it to them. You don't have to write anything.*

It is up to each individual member to participate if he or she wants to receive the discount. Members may also have a chance to receive the 100-dollar dues discount by participating in a potential CTR advocacy or charitable event by September 1st, should an event be scheduled.

TOPIC 2 – REALTORS TESTIFY AT CAPITOL

REALTORS recently testified before the state legislature, opposing a bill that would create a buyer's conveyance tax.

Joe Scozzafava Testimony: *In my work as a REALTOR, I see buyers struggle to save for closing costs everyday.*

Joanne Breen Testimony: *CTR feels this bill is not only harmful but unnecessary.*

Joanne Breen and Joe Scozzafava spoke on behalf of the association and its members against House Bill 5254. The bill would create a pilot program in any municipality, giving them the authority to impose a buyers' conveyance tax. The tax on home sales would then be used to fund the purchase or preservation of open space in those municipalities. Both Breen and Scozzafava stressed the point that any new taxes or fees on home sales would be bad for Connecticut, especially when it comes to millennial homebuyers.

Joe Scozzafava: *They have good cash flow but don't have a lot of savings. Every dollar that is going to add to their closing costs and the upfront purchase of a home is very significant to them. This could be the tipping point. It may not be a huge number but they keep adding up.*

Joanne Breen: *I'm not sure what our legislators don't understand about the fragility of the market. We just don't have a solid housing market yet in Connecticut. Anything we do to add costs to it is just going to hurt the housing market in general.*

REALTORS helped defeat similar proposals considered in prior years. CTR opposes any legislation that expands or creates taxes on real estate.

TOPIC 3 – GATES SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS NOW AVAILABLE

The CT REALTORS Foundation is now accepting applications for the Gates Scholarship program. Children and step children of Connecticut REALTORS and association staff who are high school seniors or full-time college students with at least one more year to complete are eligible to apply. Foundation Chair Deb Chamberlain says the goal is to help ease the financial burden of college.

Deb Chamberlain: *If you're a REALTOR and your children are getting ready to go to college, why wouldn't you want to take advantage of the program and apply for the scholarship. We want to help. That's what that money is there for.*

The Gates Scholarship Fund honors the memory of former CTR executive vice president Raymond Gates Jr, who died in a car accident in 1976. The fund was originally established to help his children through college and was later expanded. The Gates Scholarship Fund has awarded more than 921-thousand dollars in scholarships over the past 42 years. The deadline to apply this year is April 12th. Go to ctrealtors-care.org/scholarships for more information.

TOPIC 4 – GOVERNOR'S BUDGET

Governor Ned Lamont will present his budget proposal later this month and many members of the legislature are eager to hear his plan. State Representative Sean Scanlon from Guilford says he's optimistic the new governor will bring a new approach to the state budget.

Representative Scanlon: *I think the governor is going to do stuff differently than it has been done in the past. I think he's going to bring fresh eyes to a big problem. I'm really excited about the fact that he says he's going to roll up his sleeves, work across the aisle, bring in a lot of different people, new ideas and some different stuff.*

Lamont will deliver his budget address on February 20th.

TOPIC 5 – STAMFORD BOARD HONORED BY CITY

The City of Stamford recently honored the Stamford Board of REALTORS for celebrating its 100th anniversary. The Board of Representatives presented board leaders with a plaque and proclamation, thanking the Board of REALTORS for its commitment to the community over the past 100 years.

That is your five in five. I'm Kristi Olds for CTR TV.