

# 2017 Kansas REALTORS® Legislative Agenda



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Better business begins at the Capitol. Understand the top issues affecting real estate in Kansas today and how the Kansas state legislature can better protect property ownership and your business interests.

REALTORS® are dedicated to working with elected officials for a better real estate market. Our work focuses on job growth, economic development, and protecting private property rights. This results in a better quality of life and more affordable housing opportunities across the state.

Read on to learn how legislative issues could affect your business. Then join Kansas REALTORS® at Capitol Conference on January 31 – February 2.

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## 1. Oppose Tax Increases for the Middle-Class Property Owners

### WHAT'S HAPPENING:

- Economic growth depends on a stable investment environment with a consistent tax code. **Eliminating the mortgage interest and property tax deductions would lead to a tax increase for middle-class Kansas homeowners.** In past years, the Legislature has wisely rejected eliminating the deduction, but further changes to the state income tax code would create uncertainty for Kansas families, small business owners and farmers.

### WHAT LAWMAKERS SHOULD DO:

- KAR will ask the Kansas Legislature to **not harm the real estate market, by opposing attempts to eliminate the mortgage interest and property tax deductions.** Further, if significant changes are considered for income taxes, restoration of the full deduction for mortgage interest and property taxes should be included.

## 2. Defend Right to Vote on Property Taxes

### WHAT'S HAPPENING:

- In 2015, the Legislature gave voters the right to vote when cities and counties increase property tax by more than the rate of inflation over the preceding year. In 2016, the **Kansas legislature moved the effective date of the law up to 2017**, and provided meaningful exemptions while maintaining the spirit of the law.

### WHAT LAWMAKERS SHOULD DO:

- Tax revenues should be equitably collected from a variety of sources, and real estate should not be burdened with an unreasonable share. **The public vote requirement passed by the legislature puts the question of property tax increases in the hands of the people.**

### 3. Solve the School Finance Issue

#### WHAT'S HAPPENING:

- Quality of public schools is proven to be a driving force in growth of residential and business communities. **REALTORS® support responsible funding of public schools.**

#### WHAT LAWMAKERS SHOULD DO:

- KAR will ask the Kansas Legislature to **consider the negative impact of excessive increases in mill levy rates to fund schools.** We believe tax revenues should be collected from a variety of sources. Local option budgets should have oversight by local taxpayers with an affirmative vote of the local electorate.

### 5. Continue Background Checks on Real Estate Licenses

#### WHAT'S HAPPENING:

- Real estate licensees have a special ethical responsibility as they have access to clients' homes and personal information.

#### WHAT LAWMAKERS SHOULD DO:

- KAR wants to protect consumers who interact with Kansas real estate licensees. The Kansas Real Estate Commission must be able to make reasonable inquiries into the criminal background of license applicants and deny licenses to those with felony convictions. **KAR will ask the Kansas Legislature to oppose any efforts to erode KREC's ability to protect Kansas consumers.**

### 4. Protect Consumer Choice in the Housing Market

#### WHAT'S HAPPENING:

- In 2016, the **Kansas Legislature prohibited any city or county from imposing price controls** on privately owned property, with minor exceptions.

#### WHAT LAWMAKERS SHOULD DO:

- KAR will ask the Kansas Legislature to **protect consumer choice and the free market** by opposing any legislation that allows local governments to establish or enforce price controls on commercial or residential private property.