

Release Date: 11/17/08
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Representatives Of The Northern Fairfield County Association of REALTORS® Joined More Than 20,000 REALTORS® At NAR's Conference & Expo In Orlando

Betsy Pankulis; President, Jeanne Garzi; President Elect & Richard Eimicke; Association Executive of The Northern Fairfield County Association of REALTORS® were among the more than 20,000 REALTORS® attending the 2008 REALTOR® Conference & Expo, held in Orlando, November 7-10. REALTORS® came to the National Association of REALTORS® annual conference to learn about how the changing political and economic landscapes are likely to affect the real estate industry.

Richard F. Gaylord, NAR's 2008 president, urged REALTORS® to help restore confidence in the real estate market by educating the public about the value of housing as a good long-term investment. 'Homeownership offers immediate benefits and long-term value,' said Gaylord. 'The opportunities for today's home buyers are many and varied – interest rates are low, the supply of homes for sale is plentiful and prices are more affordable than they have been in several years.'

To encourage more buyers into the housing market, NAR has proposed that the government buy down mortgage interest rates to ensure fixed low rates for home buyers. In October, NAR presented a four-point plan to Congress recommending that the repayment feature be removed from the first-time home buyer tax credit, that the tax credit be extended to all buyers, that higher FHA and conventional loan limits be made permanent – up to \$729,000 in high-cost areas – to give buyers in these areas access to safer, more affordable mortgages, and that the ban on large banks entering real estate brokerage and management be made permanent.

During the conference, REALTORS® were encouraged to contact their members in the U.S. House and Senate to press for this four-point plan. President Pankulis noted that REALTORS® have a unique opportunity to encourage Congress to enact a stimulus plan. 'The overall economy cannot turn around without a housing recovery, and we need to emphasize this to Congress as our lawmakers grapple with the economic challenges faced across America.'

During the conference, Charles McMillan, from Fort Worth, Texas, was installed as the first African American president in NAR's 100-year history. Touting his theme, 'United Toward Tomorrow,' McMillan called on all members to work together to renew, revitalize and reinvigorate the real estate market. The National Association of REALTORS®, 'The Voice for Real Estate,' is America's largest trade association, representing 1.2 million members involved in all aspects of the residential and commercial real estate industries.

Pictured are Jeanne Garzi, Richard Eimicke & Betsy Pankulis



Press Release Sent to: News Times