



## **Our Advocacy**

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The Hudson Gateway Association of REALTORS® (HGAR) is a not-for-profit trade association representing 13,000 real estate professionals in The Bronx, Manhattan, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, and Westchester. HGAR believes in homeownership for all, in every community. We advocate for policies that eliminate barriers to homeownership and promote a dynamic, inclusive, and accessible real estate market.

## **Policy Priorities**

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### **Expand Access to Homeownership**

Homeownership is foundational to economic stability and intergenerational wealth-building. For too many New Yorkers, the pathway to homeownership is complicated by economic and historical barriers, including overlapping layers of taxes, closing costs and fees that prevent access to the residential real estate market. HGAR strongly supports legislation designed to dismantle barriers to homeownership, particularly among historically disadvantaged communities.

- HGAR supports enacting a first-time homebuyer savings account program to assist New Yorkers saving for their first home.
- HGAR supports affordable workforce housing development through tax incentives and smart zoning policies to accelerate conversion of commercial spaces into residential housing.
- HGAR supports direct state funding for universal broadband internet access.
- HGAR supports expanding state-level student debt forgiveness programs to address onerous debt burdens that negatively impact potential homebuyers' ability to save for a down payment or to qualify for a home loan.

### **Strengthen New York's Fair Housing Laws**

REALTORS® fundamentally support an open housing market free from discrimination, and strongly support policies that affirmatively further fair housing. All New Yorkers suffer when discrimination and segregation artificially constrain homeownership and limit the intergenerational wealth it builds. HGAR supports the following legislation to combat housing discrimination by increasing transparency in the cooperative housing purchase process:

- **S.2846** (Kavanagh) / **A.5856** (Lavine)
- **S.2874** (Kavanagh) / **A.1623** (Perry)
- **S.1449-A** (Sanders) / **A.6510** (Walker)



**Promote Housing Stability**

HGAR supports New York State’s continued efforts to provide necessary relief to tenants who are unable to pay rent due to impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and to building owners struggling to make mortgage and property tax payments resulting from tenants’ economic instability.

**Good Cause Eviction**

HGAR strongly opposes **S.3082** (Salazar) / **A.5573** (Hunter), which introduces impractical and overly restrictive terms into existing leases and imposes a system of de facto statewide rent control that would have a chilling effect on real estate investment as New York’s economy recovers from COVID-19. Building owners’ ability to renovate and repair apartments is crucial – 76% of New York’s apartments were built before 1980, according to U.S. Census Bureau data. New York must preserve existing housing supply, or risk exacerbating the housing shortage.

**Protect Real Estate Licensees**

HGAR strongly opposes all legislation that seeks to deprive real estate brokers and salespersons their hard-won status as independent contractors. Legislation such as **A.2685** (Joyner) that aims to redefine or reclassify the relationship between real estate brokers and salespersons conflicts with longstanding exemptions already in law and relied upon by industry professionals.

**\*[Placeholder for 421-a]\***

**Technical Amendment to Telemarketing Restrictions**

Residential buyers and sellers benefit from professional advice when entering the real estate market, especially first-time buyers or sellers entering the market in unprecedented times. HGAR strongly supports **S.7656** (Thomas) / **A.8662** (Cusick), allowing buyers and sellers to communicate with real estate professionals during a declared state of emergency.

**Reduce State and Local Real Estate Taxes**

HGAR strongly opposes all legislation that creates barriers to homeownership, including increases in state and local mortgage recording taxes or real estate transfer taxes. Real estate transaction taxes diminish homebuyer equity and make saving for a down payment more difficult. New York must adopt policies that make homebuying more affordable. HGAR opposes:

- **S.4199** (Hoylman) / **A.5736** (Glick)
- **S.5376** (Salazar) / **A.6574** (Cruz)
- **S.1461** (Breslin) / **S.1668** (Skoufis) / **S.1810** (Skoufis) / **A.5585** (Schmitt)