

John Smaby  
2019 President

Bob Goldberg  
Chief Executive Officer

**ADVOCACY GROUP**  
William E. Malkasian  
Chief Advocacy Officer/Senior Vice President

Shannon McGahn  
Senior Vice President Government Affairs

500 New Jersey Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20001-2020  
Phone 202-383-1194  
WWW.NAR.REALTOR

October 30, 2019

The Honorable Susan Collins  
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Collins:

On behalf of the more than 1.3 million members of the National Association of REALTORS®, I thank you for introducing legislation to increase the limitation on the deduction for state and local taxes for married couples filing a joint return. Your bill would significantly increase the tax incentives for purchasing and owning a home for millions of American families.

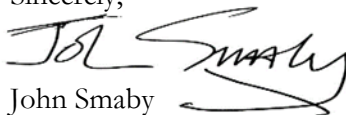
Although the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 delivered numerous welcomed changes to families and individuals across the country, this landmark legislation also brought the unintentional – and unfortunate – consequence of significantly reducing the tax incentives for homeownership in America. Because the new higher standard deduction exceeds the total itemized deductions for approximately 90 percent of tax filers, only a small minority of homeowners and potential buyers can now benefit from property tax and mortgage interest deductions.

For millions of Americans, limiting the amount of state and local taxes that can be deducted greatly diminished or erased the long-standing tax incentives of owning a home. Moreover, the SALT cap features an inherent flaw that, while probably unintended, results in inequitable treatment of taxpayers. Because the \$10,000 limit is the same for single and for joint filers, it results in a serious penalty on marriage.

If enacted, your legislation would alleviate many of the aforementioned problems. Doubling the SALT limit to \$20,000 for married filing joint tax returns would open the door for millions more current and prospective homeowners to regain the incentive that our tax law has provided for decades. And since the limit for married couples would be exactly twice that for single filers, the indefensible marriage penalty in the SALT cap would be eliminated.

Homeownership has long been a vital part of the American Dream. Research shows that an overwhelming majority of current renters aspire to own a home, and we know that our nation's faith in homeownership has persisted through the Great Recession. For well over a century, our tax system has helped American families in reaching this Dream. Thank you for your leadership in helping to ensure that it continues.

Sincerely,



John Smaby  
2019 President, National Association of REALTORS®

