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March 20, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Republican Leader  
U.S. Senate  
317 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer  
Democratic Leader  
U.S. Senate  
322 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1236 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Republican Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2468 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, and Leader McCarthy:

On behalf of the 1.4 million REALTORS®, I urge you to support S. 3533, the Securing and Enabling Commerce Using Remote and Electronic Notarization Act of 2020 (SECURE Notarization Act) and similar legislation to be introduced in the House, which will provide immediate and meaningful relief to America's homeowners and prospective buyers. Please include this bipartisan proposal in the upcoming response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

While interest rates are at historic lows and demand exists in the purchase market, disruptions are near at hand due to the effects of COVID-19 on our communities and the economy. Historically about 37% of home sales occur during the months from March to June, averaging over 1.8 million during that time. Congress needs to make all efforts to keep systems up and operational to prevent these transactions from being cancelled or interrupted.

In much the same way that many are now working remotely, allowing for Remote Online Notarizations (RONs) will permit a notary and signer, who are in different physical locations, to safely and securely execute electronic documents using two-way audiovisual communication. This system would facilitate continued transactions and prevent at least some of the market disruption that will occur. Currently, 23 states have approved the use of RON technology. While a number of additional states are debating RON legislation, borrowers in more than half the country remain unable to close on a real estate transaction without an in-person signing.

Given this time of crisis and uncertainty, there is an urgent need for Congress to immediately allow loan transactions to be completed using RON. The SECURE Notarization Act expands the availability of RON to consumers in all states, provides certainty for interstate recognition of RON and establishes minimum standards to ensure strong consumer protections. This legislation will allow Americans to complete real estate and loan transactions without having to gather at a closing table and risk potential illness.

RON is a critical tool to ensure businesses and consumers can continue executing and notarizing critical documents. We urge support of the SECURE Notarization Act as well as its inclusion in any stimulus package.

Sincerely,

Vince Malta  
2020 President, National Association of REALTORS®

cc: U.S. Senate  
U.S. House of Representatives



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