NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® (NAR)
RPAC CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATE SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE
(Updated as of 4/4/2014)

It is the policy of NAR's RPAC Trustees that a candidate questionnaire must be completed for all open seat and challenger candidates for the House and Senate. A candidate interview is highly encouraged to obtain the answers to the questionnaire in person. The candidate questionnaire should be used during the interview and must be faxed to RPAC following completion of an online request for RPAC funds for the request to be considered.

All Special Recognition requests for challengers and open seat candidates must be accompanied by a candidate questionnaire or summary of a personal interview. The National RPAC Trustees will not consider requests until the candidate has officially declared for the office he/she is seeking and has filed the appropriate paperwork with the FEC. National RPAC encourages the state interviewing committee to share the candidate questionnaire with the candidate prior to the interview so the candidate may have an opportunity to be familiar with NAR issues. The interviewing committee should obtain from NAR the official NAR answers to the questions; however the answers should not be shared with the candidate. A personal interview is encouraged, but is not necessary as long as the candidate completes the candidate questionnaire. Candidates are also encouraged to interview with NAR staff if they are in Washington, DC for other business as well. However, it is National Trustee policy that NAR staff shall not interview federal challenger candidates until the year of the election so as not to send any possible mixed signals to incumbents with whom NAR is working on legislation. Once an incumbent has received Special Recognition support, NAR Staff shall not meet with their challenger.

Incumbents do not need to complete a questionnaire. However, if state RPAC is considering opposing the incumbent, the incumbent must be offered an interview to defend his record. If he/she chooses to accept, a completed incumbent questionnaire should be submitted with the request, whether the request is for the incumbent or the challenger. In Open Seat races, major candidates from both parties must be offered a questionnaire to complete before making a Primary or General Election request. All questionnaires collected should be submitted along with the request for whichever candidate the state recommends. Incumbent House Members who are running for the senate rather than for re-election to their House seat are not required to complete a questionnaire. When requesting debt relief, a candidate questionnaire is preferred but not required. If one was obtained during the election, it should be forwarded with the request, but the newly elected Member should not be asked to complete one.

The following candidate information should be considered by associations conducting candidate interviews. The information in sections I - IV (background, organizational, financial and reasons for running) may be ascertained from the campaign or candidate in advance of a formal candidate interview conducted by the association. By so doing, your association's screening committee will have more time to focus on the legislative questions found in Section V.

Questions? Please contact your respective NAR Political Representative or Vice President of RPAC Disbursements and Political Programs, Scott Reiter at (202) 383-1072, sreiter@realtors.org, Fax: (202) 383-7580.

Section I. **Campaign Information**

Candidate's full name: ____

Campaign Headquarters Street Address (Do not use Post Box address):

____

City: _________________ State: ______ ZIP: _______________

Telephone #: ___________________________

Campaign Manager: ____

Campaign Treasurer: ____

State/Congressional District: ______ Political Party: ____________

Curent Position/Occupation: __________________________________

For current office holders, term expires: ________________________

Previous public offices or appointments:
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Section II. Financial

How much has been raised? _____________________ Date? ______

Current Cash-on-hand: _______________________________________

What do you expect to spend? Primary: _________ General: ______
(Please choose range for each election: <$250,000; $250,000-$500,000; over $500,000)

Does candidate accept PAC funds? Yes ☐ No ☐

Section III. Basis for Candidacy

Please give three (3) reasons why you are running:____
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List major endorsements received for this race:____
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Section IV. Organizational

1. What previous relationship has this candidate had with the REALTOR® association?
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2. Please name REALTORS® supportive of your candidacy and if they hold any official roles.
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3. What are demographics of your district, (i.e. number of registered voters; % registered in both parties; rural, suburban, urban; racial mix, blue/white collar, homeowners, renters)?____
   ____
   ____

4. What is your campaign's plan/strategy to win?_______________________________
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5. Are you using pollsters or other consultants? Please name them and provide office address and phone number.____
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6. Please provide most recent polling information: (results, when poll was taken, who conducted poll)____
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V. RPAC CANDIDATE QUESTIONAIRE: NAR LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

I. TAXES

A) REALTORS® share the concerns of many Americans that something must be done to solve our nation's fiscal crisis. However, REALTORS® also recognize that the housing market is one of the largest engines of economic growth and represents the long-term savings of millions of American families. While the Mortgage Interest Deduction (MID) remains very popular with American households, there have been suggestions to make changes such as reducing the cap on deductible interest, eliminating the deduction for second homes, converting the deduction to a credit, or eliminating the deduction entirely.

What is your position on tax reforms that would reduce or eliminate the mortgage interest deduction?

☐ *Support* ☐ *Oppose* ☐ *Other*

*Please explain:*____
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B) *Economists estimate that homeowners pay between 80-90% of all federal income taxes. Under current law, taxpayers are permitted to deduct taxes paid to state and local governments, including real property taxes. If this deduction for state and local taxes paid were eliminated, it would result in a system of double taxation – or a tax on a tax. This could have a significant financial impact on homeowners, who already shoulder the vast majority of federal taxes.*

What is your position on measures that would reduce or eliminate the deduction for taxes paid to state and local governments?

☐ *Support* ☐ *Oppose* ☐ *Other*

*Please explain:*____
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C) While the Mortgage Interest Deduction has received most of the attention from pundits and academics, the capital gains tax exemption for primary residence is also a crucial provision for American households. Under current tax law, single filers are exempt from capital gains tax on the first $250,000 upon the sale of a primary residence ($500,000 for married couples filing jointly). This exemption allows families to move into a new home without fear of a hefty tax bill upon the sale of their home. While there are no concrete proposals that would alter current law, REALTORS® share homeowners' concerns that this provision could be changed.

What is your position on tax reforms that would reduce or eliminate the capital gains tax exemption for primary residences?

☐ *Support* ☐ *Oppose* ☐ *Other*

*Please explain:*____
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D) Millions of Americans have had their lives turned upside down by job loss and depressed home values. As a result, struggling homeowners are working with experts to modify their existing mortgage, or are selling their home at a loss through a process called a short sale. Since 2007, the Mortgage Debt Forgiveness Tax provision has been renewed several times on a short term basis to prevent the IRS from taxing Americans on "phantom income"—money they never see when part of their mortgage is forgiven.

Do you support extending the Mortgage Debt Forgiveness Tax provision and preventing homeowners from being taxed on income they never receive?

☐ *Support* ☐ *Oppose* ☐ *Other*

*Please explain:*____
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II. HOUSING & MORTGAGE FINANCE

A) Currently, there is discussion about the role that government should play in the secondary mortgage market, and how the nation's Government-Sponsored Enterprises (GSEs), Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, should be handled. The Obama Administration's 2011 white paper, "Reforming America's Housing Finance Market", provides three options for the role of government in the secondary market and the handling of the GSEs. These options range from near total privatization of the secondary mortgage market, save for the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), to the government only entering the market space during a catastrophic event, to the government providing a level of re-insurance on certain mortgage-backed securities (MBS). While many arguments regarding these approaches exist, the current problems with liquidity in the housing mortgage markets have illustrated the importance of some degree of public involvement when private lending activity is constrained.

Do you support some level of government participation in the secondary mortgage market to ensure liquidity?

☐ Support ☐ Oppose ☐ Other

Please explain:____
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(B) As part of the Dodd-Frank Act section on "risk retention" (Sec. 941), Congress intended to create a broad exemption for mortgages meeting a specific set of criteria defined as "qualified residential mortgages" (QRMs). Early comments from federal regulators indicate that they would focus on a narrow definition that is driven primarily by a high downpayment standard. Research shows that strong, traditional underwriting standards are much more correlated to loan performance than a borrower's downpayment percentage.

Do you support implementing a QRM definition that includes low downpayment traditional mortgage products that have performed well before and during the nation's economic crisis?

☐ *Support* ☐ *Oppose* ☐ *Other*

*Please explain:*____
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C) With the collapse of the private secondary market in recent years, the FHA mortgage insurance program, which historically has operated without cost to taxpayers, has functioned as it was intended, by ensuring that American families have access to affordable mortgage financing. There are some today who, in response to the problems that have plagued the real estate and mortgage markets, propose ending all government involvement in the mortgage process – even for first time homebuyers, and others who are underserved by the private market.

Do you support continuing government programs – like FHA, that assist American families with obtaining safe, affordable mortgage financing?

☐ Support ☐ Oppose ☐ Other

Please explain:____

III. SHORT SALES

A short sale occurs when the proceeds from a home sale are less than the outstanding mortgage balance due to one or more lenders. Short sales often take place in markets where declining home values have left homeowners far underwater. When a homeowner suffers a job loss, medical emergency or other significant hardship, lenders will often agree to conduct a short sale because the shortfall costs less than normal foreclosure proceedings. REALTORS® believe that short sales keep neighborhoods intact and reduce vandalism and blight in affected communities.

However, too often, short sales are unnecessarily delayed by lender inaction or unrealistic assessments of a property's value. This results in a prospective home buyers walking away while properties enter foreclosure.

Bipartisan legislation has been introduced in Congress that would streamline the short sale process by requiring reasonable response times to short sale applications.

Do you support legislation that would require acknowledgement of the short sale request, notification of missing information, and notification of a decision within a reasonable timeframe?

☐ Support ☐ Oppose ☐ Other

Please explain:____

IV. COMMERCIAL MARKET

The lack of liquidity continues to be a major barrier to recovery in the commercial market place. More than $1.2 trillion in commercial real estate loans will come due over the next few years, and many of these deals will have trouble getting financing.

Legislation to raise the artificial credit union business lending (MBL) was introduced last session in both chambers. The premise behind the legislation was that it would increase the cap on credit union MBL from 12.25% to 27.5% (total assets) for well-capitalized credit unions, thus offering an opportunity for increased commercial liquidity.

Would you support legislation designed to increase the cap on credit union MBL from 12.25% to 27.5% for well-capitalized credit unions?

☐ *Support* ☐ *Oppose* ☐ *Other*

*Please explain:*____

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