

We Made a Difference

RVOICE, RPAC and Independent Expenditures (IE) at work in recent local elections

Illinois has **more** units of local government than any other state in the U.S. - **6,963**.

That's 1,816 more than Texas, which is #2. And 5.4 units (municipal, township and county government) for every 10,000 residents. Add special districts (parks, library, mosquito abatement, etc.) and some Illinois residents have up to 16 government agencies in the area.

Candidates elected at the local government level often move up to state and federal office.

If we can build allies and stop issues affecting real estate at the LOCAL level, we are better prepared to defend our issues at the STATE and FEDERAL levels. Plus, it costs less to make a difference in a local election.



Visit www.illinoisrealtor.org/local_impact to watch a video featuring REALTORS® elected to local office and IAR members involved in the decision-making process for who to support and why.

In the 2015 Illinois Local Elections....

58 races received RPAC or IE funding

71% of supported candidates WON

15 REALTOR® candidates

Plus, **6 issue campaigns** (4 home rule, 1 real estate transfer tax, 1 property tax rebate/sales tax increase) received RVOICE support...and **WON**





RVOICE engages REALTORS® and private property owners through:

- Issues mobilization (e.g. oppose fire sprinkler mandates)
- Ballot initiatives (e.g. defeat home rule)
- Economic development
- Consumer resources for members
- Independent issue research and data analysis
- Polling and public opinion surveys
- Voter/property owner outreach
- *On Common Ground* newsletter proactively encourages municipal and city officials to work with REALTORS® to plan for economic success and vibrant communities

RVOICE (formerly the Advocacy Program) began in 2006 and is a proven effective program supporting the grassroots efforts of REALTOR® associations, their volunteer advocacy leaders and Government Affairs Directors (GADs).

The RVOICE toolbox includes postcard and letter campaigns, robocalls, public opinion polling, research and analysis, consumer resources.

Examples of consumer resources:

- What You Should Know about Property Taxes in Black and White
- Homeownership: Understanding the Costs of Owning a Home
- Getting It Sold - Your Resource for Staging and Curb Appeal
- Carbon Monoxide Detectors: Understanding the Law Requiring Installation
- Requirements for Septic Tank Owners



Your Best Investment In Real Estate

The Illinois REALTORS® Political Action Committee (RPAC) provides financial support for pro-REALTOR® candidates for public office at the local, state and federal level.

RPAC provides direct contributions and grassroots support reaching out to REALTORS® in “Opportunity Races” to help elect REALTORS® and REALTOR® Champions to public office.

RPAC is one of the top three trade association PACs in the nation.

It is also the most bipartisan.

Candidates who receive RPAC funding are vetted by REALTORS® for their support of the real estate business, homeownership and the rights of private property owners.

RPAC is the only political group in the country organized for REALTORS® and run by REALTORS®.

The Illinois RPAC Trustees (made up of IAR members) determine RPAC candidate support at the state and local level; the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) RPAC Federal Disbursement Trustees determine RPAC support at the federal level.

RPAC is funded by voluntary contributions from REALTORS®, members of the association, association staff and their family members over the age of 18.

RPAC is not funded by member dues.



IAR’s Political Advocacy Fund (PAF) supports local association political initiatives and the “Illinois Association of REALTORS® Fund,” an Independent Expenditure (IE) political committee to elect REALTORS® and REALTOR® Champions.

What is an “IE”?

An independent expenditure (IE) occurs without knowledge or coordination with the candidate.

IEs may include expenses for:

- Polling (candidate/issues)
- Data strategies
- Robocalls and email
- Direct mail
- Walking piece
- Radio advertisement
- Social media / website
- Get out the vote (GOTV)

Why the need for IEs?

The campaign environment has changed. In 2010 the Supreme Court’s ruling in *Citizens United vs. the Federal Election Committee* changed fundraising criteria that led to the rise of Independent Expenditure (IE) efforts. It also changed the law in 23 states including Illinois.

State Independent Expenditure Committee contribution limits are unlimited from any source at any time. Federal Independent-Expenditure-only political committees (sometimes called “super PACs”) may accept unlimited contributions.

Now that unlimited dollars can be used when communicating with the public to influence voter opinions, competing in today’s new political landscape is more challenging – and expensive – than ever.



Examples of RVOICE research:

- Cost to the Homeowner of a Fire Sprinkler Mandate
- Economic Impact of a Home Sale in Illinois
- Impact on the Economy of the Gross Receipts Tax

Examples of Ongoing "GAD Battles:"

- Home rule
- Fire sprinklers mandates
- Sign fees and ordinances
- Municipal inspections and fees
- Zoning and re-zoning
- Crime-free ordinances affecting landlords and rental properties

RVOICE is funded by a \$50 assessment for all REALTORS® and REALTOR®-Associate members.

For the 2016 dues billing cycle, an additional \$25 will be added to the RVOICE assessment to fund local and state Independent Expenditure (IE) campaigns as well as local association discretionary funding to support RPAC fundraising.

Learn more about RVOICE:
www.illinoisrealtor.org/rvoice

Download the free RVOICE brochures to give to your clients:
www.illinoisrealtor.org/rvoice/downloads
(member's only login required)



RPAC was established in 1969 by the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR). Illinois RPAC was created in 1970 and originally was called the "Real Estate Political Education Committee" of Illinois or RPEC. Today, thirty percent (30%) of "hard dollar" investments made to Illinois RPAC are sent to NAR RPAC to fund federal campaigns.

RPAC is regulated by state and federal election laws with state and federal contribution limits.

State PAC contribution limits:

- \$10,800 from an individual
- \$21,600 from a corporation, labor organization or association
- \$53,900 from a PAC

Federal PAC contribution limits:

- \$5,000 per year from an individual
- \$5,000 per year from a PAC

RPAC always has your business interests in mind.

REALTORS® and their clients confront a variety of challenges. Property tax burdens, lack of available financing, and difficulties in short sales transactions are only a few of the issues. RPAC allows REALTORS® to make sure their concerns about these issues are heard and understood by public officials.

If we choose not to participate in the political process through RPAC, then the real estate business becomes an easy target for unnecessary laws, regulations, property taxes and fees.

Learn "What is, what isn't law thanks to RPAC" and calculate your savings:

www.illinoisrealtor.org/RPAC



The National Association of REALTORS® IE Program for federal candidates was approved by the NAR Board of Directors in May 2011; the NAR state and local IE Program started in 2012. The Illinois Association of REALTORS® IE Program (Political Advocacy Fund) was approved by the IAR Board of Directors in January 2015.

Why does IAR need an IE fund (PAF) in addition to the NAR IE fund?

NAR's IE allocation to Illinois is \$4.73 per member; not enough to participate in campaigns for state senators, representatives and the large number of municipal elections (e.g., mayors, city council, county board).

In 2015, for example, the average cost of an IE ranged from \$2,000 to \$10,000+. IAR was involved in over 30 IEs.

Why the need for a REALTOR® IE program?

The cost of campaigns has increased dramatically. Federal Congressional House races cost an average \$360,000 in 1986; in 2012 \$1.6 million (344% increase). U.S. Senate races \$6.4 million in 1986, \$11.5 million in 2012 (62% increase).

Why focus local?

Illinois has more units of local government than any other state in the U.S. - 6,963.

That's 1,816 more than Texas, which is #2. And 5.4 units (municipal, township and county government) for every 10,000 residents. Add special districts (parks, library, mosquito abatement, etc.) and some Illinois residents have up to 16 government agencies in the area.

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Compare the Cost of Campaigns

\$2,000 - \$10,000+

Cost of an IAR Independent Expenditure (IE) for a LOCAL government candidate's race in 2015

\$2 million - \$20 million+

Cost of a STATE Senate/House race

\$1.6 million

Average cost of a FEDERAL House race (2012)

\$11.5 million

Average cost of FEDERAL Senate race (2012)

58 Races received RPAC or IE funding in the April elections

71% Supported candidates won their races

15 Races featured REALTORS® running for local office

We made a difference.
Learn more www.illinoisrealtor.org/local_impact

How are IEs effective?

Conducting an IE for a candidate has a wider impact than just winning a race. A REALTOR® IE demonstrates to candidates and the general public that REALTORS® have an important role on issues affecting the real estate business, buyers and sellers, and private property owners.

The PAF fund is one more step to not only participate at the local level but truly moves political advocacy to the local political area where all political activity begins.

How is the PAF funded?

Starting with the 2016 dues billing cycle, an additional \$25 will be added to the RVOICE assessment to fund local and state Independent Expenditure (IE) campaigns as well as local association discretionary funding to support RPAC fundraising.

This assessment is split between local and state associations.

- IAR uses include IEs, “soft dollars” to NAR and political costs
- Local association uses will be IEs and grants for “discretionary funds” to support RPAC fundraising.

Learn more:

<http://images.illinoisrealtor.org/2016%20PAF%20Fund%20Papers.pdf>

Questions: 217-529-2600 or IARaccess@iar.org

Sources: Opensecrets.org, Reboot Illinois, IllinoisPolicy.org, Illinois Association of REALTORS®, elections.il.gov, fec.gov, realtoractioncenter.org