

TO: REALTORS®  
Re: Housing Crisis

We are no longer the first point of contact for many of our clients. Modern technology has made it possible for the public to gain access to most of the information that used to be accessible only through your licensed professional

Knowledge is power. If we increase our knowledge so we can meet consumer need, NOT BEING ADRESSED ELSEWHERE as part of the service we routinely offer, then we can enhance our value, individually and collectively, to consumers at large. Many real estate companies have enhanced services to the upper end client, yet many REALTORS® still feel they have lost control of their clients.

Many REALTORS® serving first time home buyers or clients looking to sell under duress routinely share with me a lack of knowledge about the various loan programs out there, don't know what mandatory FHA fees are, what is IHFA, what is INHP. How does Nehemiah work? The lack of understanding among REALTORS® about how predatory lending spirals into a fierce whirlwind lends to their inability to provide service when a client needs to sell, but they are upside down financially (short sale needed). Most REALTORS® admit they send that potential customer away because they don't know how to help. Imagine the result if the agent knew how to handle that client's real estate need. If the realtor helped the client avoid foreclosure would not that result in a positive long term impact? If a REALTOR® were trained in how to be valuable during new construction negotiations and the building process wouldn't that client be a continual source of referrals. I meet too many people who had a bad building experience and IF they had a REALTOR® say "my REALTOR® didn't do anything but come get their check."

Most REALTORS® have inadequate personal experience to be a well-rounded agent. Few companies provide intensive training for new agents and even that does not cover building, predatory lending, first time buyer programs I feel both our local and state board could impact our community by providing additional training to REALTORS® advertising the need for a REALTOR®. REALTORS® are savvy on email, advertising and many other facets of the business but new challenges require new knowledge.

Many REALTORS® are frustrated with trying to do business in a volatile environment where the customers have a wealth of information BEFORE they find us to fill out their paperwork. We are definitely no longer the first point of contact. I know I am personally aware of the fact that I need to be well-informed so I at least know more than my customer. I believe many

REALTORS® feel the same way. Based on comments shared with me, I also believe many feel unable to competently handle many of our current realities in real estate: sellers who are mortgaged in excess of resale value (it can be sold through short sale), Nehemiah and other down payment plans-IHFA, INHP (what do they do?), predatory lending practices, aggressive new construction sales people and consumers who are intimidated (REALTORS® are too).

Rather than walk away from these clients in frustration or muddle through feeling incompetent as an agent, but determined to get a paycheck, why not become an educated housing professional so you can again take charge of the real estate transaction. THAT IS AN OPTION.

Knowledge is power. So REALTORS® need to be taught:

1. How to sell a house that requires short sale.
2. How to write a better contract for your client doing new construction.
3. How to provide service through color selection, blueprint inspection processes.
4. Possible resources for financial literacy training for buyers who need it.

We pay specialists more because they know more. REALTORS® need to learn more so they can again be seen as specialists. Our local and state boards can make a positive impact on our city and state by providing free training.