



State Legislative Contact (SLC) Playbook & Field Guide

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Introduction

The purpose of this Playbook & Field Guide is to assist SLC appointees in acclimating them to the role, so they can become more quickly successful and effective. This basic “go-to” reference should serve as both a source for ideas and a list of best practices for the SLC community.

What is a State Legislative Contact (SLC)?

Key Illinois REALTORS® are assigned to maintain relationships with specific members of the Illinois General Assembly to keep them up-to-date on REALTOR® issues. They stay in touch throughout the year in the legislator's home district as well as at the state Capitol to help reinforce the association's legislative agenda.

The Issues

What happens at the state Capitol in Springfield, has real-world consequences. Grassroots communications help put a human face on the issues that affect our industry and let members of the General Assembly know that the choices they make affect the lives of their constituents. The facts, ideas and industry information you share with state lawmakers will help them make more informed decisions so they can more effectively legislate on REALTOR® issues in the House of Representatives and Senate.

The REALTOR® Party

The REALTOR® Party is the non-partisan approach to promoting legislation that is of importance to all REALTORS®. SLCs must be able to remove their personal biases on unrelated issues before advocating on any REALTOR®-supported issue 100% of the time.

About the SLC Program

The Illinois REALTORS® State Legislative Contact (SLC) program is the middle tier of the Government Affairs effort of the largest professional trade association in the United States. The National Association of REALTORS® represents over 1.2 million members (the Illinois REALTORS® represents over 44,000 members) involved in all facets of residential and commercial real estate as brokers, managing brokers, property managers, appraisers and counselors.

Illinois REALTORS® relies on State Legislative Contacts (SLC) to advocate on policy initiatives that will result in a fundamentally sound and dynamic U.S. real estate market and foster vibrant communities in which to live and work.

While a strong lobbying group in Springfield is important, the real power of any industry resides in the activism of its individual members. As a result, with such a large membership, Illinois REALTORS® has the potential to be an extremely powerful force at the state Capitol. However, it takes significant grassroots engagement and momentum to accomplish our legislative and regulatory goals. That's where you come in.

Regardless of the issue facing the real estate profession, there usually is a group or association advocating the opposite position. As an SLC, you are the most effective advocate for our industry at the state level. As an expert on real estate issues, and due to your close personal relationship, your legislator wants to hear from you.

Legislators want to know how a specific issue will affect their districts and they will look to you for answers. It is your voice and your experiences that will help guide their decisions. As SLCs, you are active in every legislative district across Illinois. That is an incredible responsibility with significant power.

Your efforts to educate each senator and representative will make the difference. As a result, honing and maintaining your relationships matter. When an important issue facing the real estate industry arises, we want your legislators to pick up the phone and reach out to you first - their SLC and friend whom they know and trust.

This material provides you with essential resources on the SLC Program. It includes different ways to get involved, as well as important introductory material on the legislative process. Thank you for your service in the program. Your involvement is crucial to the success of our lobbying efforts on behalf of Illinois REALTORS®.

SLC Duties & Expectations

What is Your Job as an SLC?

- Support direct lobbying in Springfield with grassroots REALTOR® involvement
- Provide a critical link to ensure a consistent message to legislators in Springfield and in the district
- Meet with your Legislator 3-4 times per year
- It's important for lawmakers to hear the local perspective or impact of issues
- Keep in touch with your legislator and involve them in appropriate local association events
- Attend in-district fundraising events when funded by RPAC
- Always advocate for REALTORS® and the REALTOR® Party
- Respond to all "Calls for Action" (CFAs) and Illinois REALTORS® requests to contact with your legislator
- Develop a SLC Contact Team (of 5-10 REALTOR® Members) who will make personalized calls (Focus on QUALITY of contacts, not QUANTITY)
- Participate in training as required by Illinois REALTORS®
- Sign the SLC Pledge
- Visit the Governmental Affairs website & Illinois REALTOR® Action Center regularly (<http://www.illinoisrealtor.org/government>)
- Sign up for REALTOR® Party Mobile Alerts (Text REALTORS to 30644)
- Participate in other REALTOR® political activities for the legislator/candidate (Locations for campaign signs; phone banks; send "Friend-to-Friend" cards; participate in social media for candidates, etc.)
- Attend the Annual Illinois REALTORS® Capitol Conference—Coordinate with your GAD to inform/lead others (including your contact teams) in meeting with your legislator; Be flexible in connecting with your legislator that day; Attend the Capitol Conference reception and greet your legislator

You Need to Always Stay Informed!

- Read State Capitol Report (distributed each session week)
- Illinois REALTORS® Local Government Affairs Page <http://www.illinoisrealtor.org/localgovernment>
- Illinois REALTORS® Member Political Profile Tool <http://www.ils skylights.com>
- Illinois General Assembly Website www.ilga.gov
- Legislator's website and e-mail
- Listserv for SLCs

Questions? Contact your local GAD or Springfield Staff

Note: If an SLC does not perform the required duties, he or she can be replaced based upon the SLC replacement protocol.

SLCs are also encouraged to make a voluntary contribution to RPAC, as a tangible, credible sign of their commitment to Illinois REALTORS® & NAR's legislative objectives and their understanding of RPAC's importance in achieving those goals.

SLC Teams

SLC Contact Teams are REALTORS® who live in the Legislative District that assist the SLC with grassroots activities - both at home and in Springfield - under the direction of the REALTORS® Political Involvement Committee (RPIC) and the State Legislative Contact (SLC). As an extension of the grassroots voice of Illinois REALTORS®, Contact Teams help organize and implement local activities that build strong relationships with lawmakers, and communicate regularly with their assigned lawmaker about critical issues, especially when there is a Call for Action.

- There should be several Contact Team members for each senator and representative serving with each SLC.
- Contact teams should include REALTORS® who are involved in the full range of real estate activities (residential, commercial, property management, land sales, etc.)
- Contact Teams ideally should represent each local REALTOR® Association in the district and perhaps even the affiliated organizations (Women’s Council of REALTORS®, Commercial Members, etc.)
- Contact Teams should reflect the diversity found in the assigned legislative district. To accomplish this goal, SLCs should consider partnering with organizations such as the National Association of Hispanic Real Estate Professionals (NAHREP), the Asian Real Estate Association of America (AREAA), and the National Association of Real Estate Brokers (Realtists).
- Contact Teams for each legislative term should be selected by the SLC no later than February 1st of the first year of the new General Assembly.

How to Respond to a Call for Action (CFA)

As the need arises, Illinois REALTORS® & NAR will launch Calls for Action (referred to as CFAs) – requests for members to contact their Member of Congress or state legislator about specific issues that are of immediate interest to REALTORS®. Responding immediately to CFAs is critical to communicating a coordinated, powerful grassroots message. As an SLC you are the first person who should respond to a CFA. (You should respond to each and every CFA you receive). Because of the importance of a CFA, Illinois REALTORS® & NAR electronically track SLC responses and periodically provides the Illinois REALTORS® Political Involvement Committee (RPIC) with reports on individual SLC performance. These reports become part of a comprehensive report to SLC Working Group & RPIC in assessing the on-going volunteer effort, and may be reviewed when it is time for the reappointment or replacement of SLCs. When responding to a CFA, please communicate directly with your Member of General Assembly and their staff.

You can do so in a number of ways:

- Writing emails and letters;
- Making a phone call;
- Sending a text message;
- Personal visit.

Through this type of direct, personal interaction, you will continue to build a relationship with your Member of the General Assembly, which will help increase your impact long-term.

How to Foster a Relationship with Your Member of the Legislature

Some REALTORS® participate in an array of activities to maximize their influence in Springfield.

Here are some examples of what you can do:

- Plan and conduct a site or office visit with your legislator in the district.
- Get to know the legislator's key staff members.
- Personally interact with and involve your Legislator in REALTOR® activities including invitations to speak at your annual meeting or attend openings of new offices or ground breakings, etc.
- Volunteering for a candidate's campaign activities will foster personal connections with that candidate (e.g., volunteering in a phone bank, hosting a fundraising event, or even opening your office for an afternoon or evening to use). It will add credibility to your grassroots messages and help you to build a lasting relationship with your legislator.
- Support REALTOR® "Get Out the Vote" efforts. Encouraging other REALTORS® to vote for candidates who support Illinois REALTORS® and NAR's public policy agenda is an ideal way to ensure the state association's and NAR's messages are acted on in the General Assembly.
- Consider making a personal contribution to your legislator's campaign.

Supporting your lawmaker will have a lasting impact on your state representative or state senator and increases your influence on behalf of Illinois REALTORS®

SLC Do's & Don't

Tips on Communicating with Your Legislator

DO...

- Do deliver the main message clearly. For example, begin with: "I'm calling you to urge you to vote AGAINST/FOR..." and end with "Thank you for speaking with me and I hope you'll support the REALTOR® position and vote against/for..." You do not want to leave an unclear impression about the REALTOR® position.
- Do feel free to give the elected official an example, but be sure it's related to what the bill or ordinance is about. If you are not sure call your state or local GAD.
- Do mention the specific bill number, and also be sure to also mention what the topic is, what the bill does and specific reasons for our opposition or support. Remember, there are several thousand proposals introduced as bills each session!
- Do ask if a lawmaker has specific concerns or reservations and address those concerns if you can. You can always say: "Let me get your concerns to our lobbyists and they will get back to you." You should do the same if the elected official has a question about the legislation that you cannot answer. Remember, an elected official may not want to commit to you at that moment about how he/she feels about the bill.
- Do contact elected official as soon as you can when needed or requested.
- Do remember that it is very effective when the Illinois REALTORS® position is communicated by you - a resident of the district and as someone with a relationship with the elected official.
- Do listen to the legislator. Often this can be just as important as asking them to listen to us.

DON'T...

- Don't go off track with the REALTOR® Legislative Agenda.
- Don't commit to changing the legislation or changing Illinois REALTORS®' position. We speak with ONE united voice. Get the concerns and objections of the elected official to one of the Illinois REALTORS® Governmental Affairs staff. Our positions are carefully developed through a committee process which involves REALTOR® leaders from across the state.
- Don't make promises about rewards for the "right" vote or threats of retribution/punishment for taking an opposing position.
- Don't wait too long in contacting the elected official. Because of the large number of bills being considered, action can occur quickly in committee or on the floor.

About RPAC

What is RPAC? RPAC (REALTORS® Political Action Committee) plays an important role in Illinois REALTORS® & NAR's government affairs efforts by providing the association with the necessary resources to support pro-REALTOR® candidates in their election efforts. As a source for funds and an influence on the candidate's election, RPAC gives REALTORS® a strong voice by helping to elect legislators who understand our interests and concerns. RPAC is the backbone of the REALTOR® Party, supporting candidates and elected officials who are supportive on issues of importance to the association's members..

RPAC Criteria for Candidate Selection There are hundreds of REALTORS® at all levels of the association who are involved in selecting which candidates receive RPAC support. This broad, grassroots-based decision system is RPAC's greatest strength. With the number of REALTORS® involved, the process ensures that decisions are not made on a partisan basis, but rather focused on the REALTOR® Party issues. Decisions are made solely on the fact that the candidate deserves support because he or she meets criteria. Political party affiliation is not a consideration for RPAC support. RPAC is the most bipartisan PAC in the country. Since our public policy positions of supporting homeownership are broadly popular across the political spectrum, we have many supporters on both sides of the aisle.

Like most PACs, RPAC adheres to the policy of supporting friendly incumbents. The criteria RPAC issues in determining its support include:

- Individual action taken to advance Pro-REALTOR® legislation
- Co-sponsorship of Illinois REALTORS® legislation
- General Assembly leadership position and committee assignments
- General Assembly voting records
- Engagement with Illinois REALTORS® Governmental Affairs Staff
- In-district accessibility
- Race competitiveness

Making an Individual Contribution to RPAC

Support of RPAC is a critical component of supporting your Members of the General Assembly. By contributing to RPAC, you can distinguish yourself as a political leader who is actively involved in politics on behalf of REALTORS®. As the Illinois REALTORS® representative to your Member of the General Assembly, it is important that you personally support the PAC that gives you the resources to do your job effectively.

Important Contact Information

Illinois REALTORS® Springfield Staff...

Illinois REALTORS® 522 S Fifth Street - Springfield, IL 62701
217-529-2600

Greg St. Aubin, Senior Vice President, Governmental Affairs
GStAubin@illinoisrealtors.org

Julie Sullivan, Director of Legislative and Political Affairs
JSullivan@illinoisrealtors.org

Neil Malone, Manager of Grassroots and Political Programs
NMalone@illinoisrealtors.org

Illinois REALTORS® Local Governmental Affairs Directors (GADs) ...

Kristopher Anderson - Chicago Association of REALTORS®

Kyle Anderson - Egyptian Board of REALTORS®, Greater Gateway Association of REALTORS® and REALTOR® Association of Southwestern Illinois

Brian Bernardoni - Chicago Association of REALTORS® and its West Towns Chapter

Conor Brown - Belvidere Board of REALTORS®, Heartland REALTOR® Organization, REALTOR® Association of Northwestern Illinois and Rockford Area Association of REALTORS®

Gideon Blustein - Livingston County Board of REALTORS® and Three Rivers Association of REALTORS®

Kristie Engerman - Bloomington-Normal Association of REALTORS®, Mid Valley Association of REALTORS®, Peoria Area Association of REALTORS® and its Lamoine Valley Chapter and Quincy Association of REALTORS®

Alex Finke - REALTORS® Association of the Fox Valley, HomeTown Association of REALTORS®, Illini Valley Association of REALTORS® and Quad City Area REALTOR® Association.

Howard Handler - North Shore/Barrington Association of REALTORS® and Mainstreet Organization of REALTORS® (Lake County)

Tom Joseph - Kankakee-Iroquois Ford Association of REALTORS® and Mainstreet Organization of REALTORS® (South Suburban Cook County) and parts of western Cook County (LaGrange area).

Jim Clayton - Capital Area REALTORS® and its West Central Chapter, Central Illinois Board of REALTORS®, Champaign County Association of REALTORS®, Danville Area Board of REALTORS®, Decatur Association of REALTORS and Logan County Board of REALTORS®

Jeff Merrinette - Mainstreet Organization of REALTORS® (DuPage County and parts of western and northwest suburban Cook County)

Mike Scobey - Oak Park Association of REALTORS® and liaison to Northern Illinois Commercial Association of REALTORS®

Resources

BE INVOLVED - BE INFORMED!

Illinois REALTORS® Action Center

<http://www.illinoisrealtor.org/Member/government/iaractioncenter>

- "Around the State"- what is happening in your community
- Link to the State Capitol Report
- Calls for Action (Illinois REALTORS® and NAR)
- Information on the Broker Involvement Program
- Information on upcoming events
- Get Informed Links on the right side (RVOICE, RPAC, etc.)

State Capitol Report

Delivered to your e-mail each Friday that the General Assembly is in Session. Also available on the Illinois REALTORS® Governmental Affairs website.

Illinois General Assembly

<http://www.ilga.gov>

- Senate and House contact information/committee assignments
- Live video/audio feeds from the Senate and House (committee and floor action)
- Text of legislation and amendments
- Session and committee schedules
- Transcripts of floor debates
- Illinois Compiled Statutes

Illinois REALTORS® Annual Capitol Conference Website

<http://www.illinoisrealtor.org/capitolconference>

Illinois General Assembly

Illinois General Assembly Offices

State Capitol - 301 S 2nd Street - Springfield, IL 62707

Stratton Building - 401 S Spring Street - Springfield, IL 62706

Illinois State Capitol

Information Desk - 217-782-2099

State of Illinois Directory Assistance - 217-782-2000

The Legislative Process

Step 1— There Ought to be a Law!

Laws originate from proposals sponsored by legislators. Ideas can be given to a legislator from the Governor through recommendations of a department or agency. They can also emerge from an idea that an interest group or member of the public believes should become law.

Step 2— The Legislative Reference Bureau (LRB) drafts the bill for the Sponsor

The Legislative Reference Bureau (LRB) drafts the idea into bill form. The legislative sponsor then files it in the House or Senate. It is assigned a bill number, introduced, and read into the official record for the first time (First Reading).

Step 3— The bill is assigned to the Rules Committee (House) or the Committee on Assignments (Senate), and then to a Substantive Committee

The Rules Committee assigns House Bills to their substantive committee, and the Committee on Assignments determines to which substantive committee Senate Bills will go. Some legislation never makes it past this point. If the Rules Committee or Committee on Assignments decides not to pursue the idea, the bill can remain (or “die”) in these committees.

Step 4— Substantive Committee Hearing

Once assigned to a substantive committee, the chairman of the committee decides if and when the bill will be given a hearing. A legislative committee hearing is a chance to debate the merits of a proposed bill. The committee will hear testimony on the merits of the bill from proponents, and opponents. The bill, usually at the discretion of the sponsor, can also be amended at this point (Committee Amendments). Bills must receive a “favorable roll call” (a majority vote from members of the committee) to advance to the floor of their respective chamber. Bills that are not called for a hearing, or that receive a hearing but do not advance, are held in committee.

Step 5— Bill is Returned to the Floor and Read a Second Time, Debate Begins

If a bill is reported favorably out of committee, it is returned to the whole chamber for further action. It is read into the record for a second time (Second Reading) and is subject to debate, motions and possible additional amendments (Floor Amendments). In most cases, Floor Amendments will be sent for a committee hearing before being added to a bill

Step 6— Bill Read a Third Time, Debated, and Voted on

When a bill is in its final form, it is moved to “Third Reading” where (if the sponsor still wishes) it is debated again and a vote is taken. If additional amendments are necessary before a final vote, the bill must be returned to the order of Second Reading to do this.

Step 7— Bill Passed and Engrossed

Upon a favorable vote by the House or Senate, the bill advances to the other legislative branch. The language of the bill in the form that passes the first chamber (including any amendments) is said to be the “Engrossed” version.

The Legislative Process (Continued)

Step 8— Second Legislative Branch Considers Bill

If the bill advances through three readings and passes the bill's chamber or origin, the engrossed version is sent to the second legislative chamber for consideration. The process in the second chamber mirrors that of the first.

Step 9 (A) — If a Bill Passes the Second Chamber in the Exact Same Form

If the bill is passed without a single change, the "Enrolled," or final, version is sent to the Governor

Step 9 (B) - If Amendments Produce Conflicting Versions

If the bill is amended by the second branch, it will have to be returned to the first branch for a concurrence vote. If concurrence is granted, the enrolled bill will contain the changes made in the second chamber. If concurrence is rejected, the bill can die unless a special joint committee, known as a "conference committee" is appointed to craft a compromise bill that will be sent to both legislative branches for a final vote. The conference committee's report recommending the compromise bill is not subject to amendment.

Step 10— Bill Enacted and Sent to Governor

A vote to enact by both legislative branches results in passage of the bill, with the newly-created Act sent to the Governor. The Governor has the authority to: sign the bill into law; allow the unsigned bill to become law; veto the legislation; or send the bill back to the Legislature with recommended amendments (an Amendatory Veto). A veto by the Governor can be overridden with a two-thirds vote in both legislative branches.

Step 11—The Idea Becomes Law!

The Public Act, which began its journey through the legislative process as an idea becomes law if it is signed by the governor.

Glossary of Legislative Terms

Adjournment

To terminate a session of a legislative body. Adjournment sine die means to end the session without definitely fixing a day to reconvene and is typically used to end a two-year session cycle of the General Assembly.

Amendment

An amendment is any proposed change to the text of a pending piece of legislation, which will alter the original text by eliminating some of it, inserting new language or both. Each amendment must be voted on and receive a majority of votes before becoming part of the bill.

Appropriation

An appropriation is a provision of law that gives authority to government agencies to allocate and disperse funds from the Treasury for a specific purpose.

Bicameral

A bicameral legislative body is one composed of two houses or chambers, usually a House of Representatives and a Senate. The Illinois Legislature is a bicameral legislative body.

Bill

A bill is the principle mechanism used by legislators to introduce legislative and regulatory proposals for consideration and debate.

Caucus

A caucus is an informal organization of legislators that exists to discuss issues of mutual concern and engage in legislative research and policy planning.

Conference Committee

Is a formal meeting of representatives of the House and the Senate to reconcile differences in provisions of a bill passed by both chambers. A majority of the Committee must reach agreement (often a compromise between the two versions) before it can be considered by either chamber in the form of a "conference report."

Co-Sponsor

A co-sponsor is a Legislator who has joined one or more other Members in his/her chamber (i.e., House or Senate) to sponsor a bill or amendment. The first Member to sign onto a bill is considered to be the sponsor; Members subsequently signing on are considered to be co-sponsors. Any number of Members may co-sponsor a bill in the House or Senate.

Engrossed Bill

An engrossed bill is a final copy of a bill or resolution that has passed the chamber in which it originated, and is sent to the second chamber for consideration.

Enrolled Bill

An enrolled bill is the final copy of a bill or resolution that has passed both chambers in identical form.

Glossary of Legislative Terms (Continued)

Fiscal Year

The fiscal year is the economic - as opposed to calendar year - for purposes of tracking budget and appropriations issues. In Illinois the fiscal year begins on July 1 and ends on June 30.

Law

A law is a requirement passed or enacted by a government body, which must be obeyed by everyone over whom that governmental body has authority. A state bill becomes a law after it passes in both houses of the Legislature and is signed by the Governor, passed over the Governor's veto, or allowed to become effective without the Governor's signature.

Legislative Leaders

The 4 individual legislators (2 Representatives, 2 Senators) elected by the members of each legislative caucus to lead their respective parties in the House of Representatives (Speaker of the House and Minority Leader) or the Senate (Senate President and Minority Leader).

Majority

Representing more than half of the seats in the House or Senate

Minority

Representing less than half of the seats in the House of Representatives or the Senate.

Opponent

A group or individual against a specific piece of legislation

Proponent

A group or individual in favor of a specific piece of legislation

Quorum

The minimum number of members of a legislative body or committee needed to conduct business

Shell Bill

A bill introduced without any substantive provisions attached. This procedure allows the legislature flexibility to consider issues that may arise during a legislative session that are later attached as an amendment to the specific section of the statutes that need to be addressed. This ensures that the "single subject" rule required by the Illinois Constitution is followed. The term "vehicle bill" is also used.

Sponsor

The sponsor of a bill is the legislator who officially introduces the legislation for consideration and debate. All legislation must be sponsored by at least one legislator, but other legislators may add their names to a bill as co-sponsors.

The SLC Pledge Form

ILLINOIS STATE LEGISLATIVE CONTACT PLEDGE FORM

The role of the State Legislative Contact (SLC) is a critical component within IAR's advocacy program. Each SLC serves as an educator to/influencer of their member of the Illinois House or Senate with respect to the issues important to the real estate industry and protecting private property rights. To that end, each SLC should agree to perform the following duties:

1. Respond to all IAR Calls for Action
2. Advocate on behalf of all REALTORS® within the district and within Illinois
3. Contact the Illinois Representative or Senator at least once per quarter and submit a field report each time
4. Participate in training as required
5. To the extent possible attend any local RPAC supported event
6. Attend each annual Capitol Conference
7. Develop a contact team
8. Participate in Illinois RPAC at the \$250 level at a minimum.
9. Sign and return this pledge form

By my signature below, I hereby certify that I have read each of the SLC duties carefully and pledge to perform them to the best of my abilities throughout my term (which coincides with the term of the House or Senate member). Further, I acknowledge that if I do not meet the standards of performance, I will be removed from the position.

State House State Senate District # _____

Name of Legislator: _____

SLC Name: _____

Date: _____

SLC Signature: _____

As referenced in the SLC Pledge Form and the SLC responsibilities you have agreed to fulfill all the duties as prescribed in the SLC job description. If you do not, you may be replaced. The IAR Executive Committee has developed a protocol for replacement of any SLC that fails to meet the expectations set forth in the SLC job description.

ILLINOIS RPAC PAYMENT INFORMATION

_____ CHECK, payable to Illinois RPAC in the amount of \$ _____

_____ Visa _____ MasterCard _____ AMEX _____ Discover

Card #: _____ EXP. Date: _____ / _____

Signature of Cardholder (required): _____