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**REALTORS® ASSOCIATION
OF
METROPOLITAN PITTSBURGH**
Established 1911
"THE VOICE FOR REAL ESTATE"

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May 23, 2005

Ms. Debi Sopko
Administrator
State Real Estate Commission
P.O. Box 2649
Harrisburg, PA 17105

~~VIA FACSIMILE (717-787-0250) - hard copy to follow~~ Hand Delivered to Judith Pachter
Schulder, Counsel

Dear Ms. Sopko:

The REALTORS® Association of Metropolitan Pittsburgh (RAMP), with its more than 2,700 members, appreciates the opportunity to comment on the proposed regulation titled "Biennial Renewal Fee Increases" (16A-5612) published in the April 23rd edition of *The Pennsylvania Bulletin*.

The proposed regulation provides for a 50% increase in the biennial renewal fees for real estate licensees including brokers and associate brokers, cemetery brokers and salespersons, rental listing referral agents, and salespersons. The proposal also increases fees for promotional property registration, approval of real estate education providers, satellite locations, courses and instructors.

The REALTORS® Association of Metropolitan Pittsburgh is vehemently opposed to the proposed increases and urges the State Real Estate Commission to examine other options.

Based on the budgetary data published in the proposed regulation, RAMP believes that any budgetary shortfall currently forecast could be resolved through budget "tightening" or other options. The proposed increases, in our opinion, will generate significantly more money than what may be needed by the State Real Estate Commission and are not currently justified.

RAMP appreciates the opportunity to comment on the proposed renewal fee increases and requests you give our comments your full and thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Victoria M. Lowry'.

Victoria M. Lowry
President

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**Pennsylvania Association of
REALTORS®**

The Voice for Real Estate® in Pennsylvania

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STATE REAL ESTATE COMMISSION

May 19, 2005

Judith Pachter Schulder, Counsel
State Real Estate Commission
PO Box 2649
Harrisburg, PA 17105-2649

Dear Ms. Schulder:

As an organization that represents 30,000 of the Commonwealth's real estate licensees, the Pennsylvania Association of REALTORS® (PAR) welcomes the opportunity to provide input on the proposed regulation titled "Biennial Renewal Fee Increases" (16A-5612) published in the April 23rd edition of *The Pennsylvania Bulletin*.

The proposed regulation provides for a 50% increase in the biennial renewal fees for real estate licensees including brokers and associate brokers, cemetery brokers and salespersons, rental listing referral agents, and salespersons. The proposal also increases fees for promotional property registration, approval of real estate education providers, satellite locations, courses and instructors.

Under provisions of the Real Estate Licensing and Registration Act, the Real Estate Commission must generate enough revenue so as to meet or exceed projected expenditures. Although PAR puts forward no barrier towards this fee increase, we note that administrative costs associated with staff to process renewal applications is one reason why the Commission is over-budget.

A backlog of application processing happens with every renewal cycle and, as the Commission is aware, is a point of continued strain within our membership. We therefore ask the Commission to urge the Bureau of Professional and Occupational Affairs to use the additional monies raised by the proposed fee increase to hire additional staff for processing renewal applications and other duties as required by the Commission.

We thank the Commission for their due diligence in examining other avenues before proceeding with this proposed fee increase. Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment on this regulatory proposal. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Derenda Updegrave

Derenda Updegrave
Director, Government Affairs