

Government Update



ADVOCACY

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LOCAL
ACCURATE
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GAD Institute

Day 1:

Track A: Data that Persuades, Not Just Parades

- An hour long interactive session where grouped GADS put together an advocacy strategy depending on a predetermined situation. My situation was a tornado destroying a small rural community, and updates to lot use and nonconformity would make it difficult to rebuild on the existing lots.

Track B: Policy to Plain English

- This 45 minute session pertained to how to simplify legal and legislative language into plain English for the ease of members and the public.

Track B: Grassroots and Grasstops Mobilization

- Speakers for this session went over specific instances where they had performed an advocacy strategy for their respective associations, the plans they implemented, and their success or failure.



GAD Institute

Day 1:

GAD Roundtable Discussion

- A NAR staple, this allows GADs to walk to the mic and ask their colleagues specific questions. Be thankful we aren't in California or Illinois where new taxes and tough rent control measures are enacted, as these topics took much of the time.

GAD Institute

Day 2:

Welcome to Columbus

- The Mayor of Columbus welcomed us and went over his work as the mayor of a city of nearly 1 million people. Columbus sits uniquely as a college town and a medium sized business market, so the need for rentable housing, starter homes, public transportation, and other needs is extremely important to the health of the city.

NAR Advocacy Update

- The NAR team gave the GADs an update on Washington, but was largely a discussion on the 21st century road to housing bill which was the subject of news recently with the President refusing to sign it over failure to pass the Save America Act.

GAD Break Out

- Again, GADS were invited to swap stories with their peers, but this was more honed-in as they paired us with similar areas and either in local or state association groups.



GAD Institute

Day 2:

Data Centers

- Two guests from Northern Virginia provided their experiences in bringing data centers to their areas. Both were proponents and the largest take away is that data centers make sense for some places, but not all. Questions were submitted online and largely touched on how to articulate new information to members and the public.

Lightning Rounds

- One of my favorite activities during NAR events, the large conference room we're in is set up with individual topics at each table, and every few minutes attendees rotate around. It's a good way to meet NAR staff to learn about grants, advocacy efforts, etc. and meet other GADs who are facing similar issues as I am.

Keynote

- Ohio REALTORS concluded the day by welcoming us again, talking about the relationship they have with their state, and overall nice comments about the event.



GAD Institute

Day 3:

Chair Election

- The GAD from Georgia REALTORS will be the next vice-chair and newxt convention will be in Arlington VA.

Inside the 2026 Elections

- Dave Wasserman from the Cook report gave a light hearted and humorous look at the 26 elections, including the hotly contested Senate races and surprises from the summer primaries.

GOLDEN R	CRYSTAL R	STERLING R	STERLING R (con't)	PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE
Grace Masten	Tim Arnett	Veronica Bishop	Joni Martin Williamson	Grace Masten
	Lauren Bunting	Joe Brach	Mia McCarthy	Bernie Flax
	Kevin Decker	Kate Deckenback	Mac McGraw	Austin Whitehead
	Bernie Flax	Bilonna Dilling	Steve Parsons	
	Darron Whitehead	Jay Doaty	Carol Proctor	
	Joe Wilson	Diana Dovel	John Rego	
		Cameron Drew	Jenny Sheppard	
		Bethany Drew	Leslie Smith	
		Greg Erdie	Frances Sterling	
		Kim Heaney	Brigit Taylor	
		Debora Hileman	Mike Weisner	
		Hunter Isaac	Austin Whitehead	
		Chris Jett	Jessica Ziegler	
		Brandon Johnson		



MD REALTOR LEGISLATIVE WRAP UP

[Click here to view the Sine Die report from MR](#)

[View more here.](#)





Comptroller and DHCD Housing Update

The Maryland Comptroller, Brooke Lierman, presented her office's Housing portion of the State of the Economy, [linked here](#).

In it are key findings pertaining to Maryland's housing economy, including an acknowledgement of the 100,000 unit shortage in the state, potential reasonings behind that shortage including rising costs of materials and labor (Maryland cost of building exceeds the national average), stagnant permitting (neighbor states and states with high growth outpace Maryland in single-family and multi-family permitting), among other data points.

One analogy the report draws is to the Smith Island Cake, where the process to obtain the necessary permits to development is similar to our Somerset attraction's layers of cake and fudge.

Suggestions include expanded townhome zoning, residential development in commercial zones, ADU implementation, building code reform, among others. Certainly an interesting read and I'll have a summary of it next week!





DHCD Housing Needs Assessment for 2026

[Click here to read the full assessment.](#)

DHCD put their housing needs assessment out this past week – here are a few key takeaways:

- Maryland needs about 590,000 new housing units by 2045 to meet projected demand
- The cost burden for renters has increased from 33% since 2000 to 46% since 2022.
- Homeownership is increasingly out of reach for moderate-income households; only 49% could afford the median home in 2022, down from 75% in 2000.
- For every 1,000 renters earning 0–30% of Area Median Income (AMI), 610 affordable homes are missing.
- The lower shore has an average of 20% - 55%+ of its renters are cost burdened.
- Total annual permitted units has been halved since 2000.

Maryland's housing shortage is multifaceted, and DHCD will be bringing forth legislation this Session to remedy the worsening inventory shortage for our state. This is a very interesting read and I'm happy to discuss further!

