

REALTORS® Political Action Committee (RPAC) Research Guide

NAR Archives Research Guide

The National Association of REALTORS® Archives produces Research Guides with the goal of helping members, scholars, and staff locate information held in the Archives. Each Guide covers one series of records, providing historical background and context on how the materials relate to NAR as a whole. In addition, the Guides contain content lists, brief notes about the materials, and box locations within the Archives. Researchers can use these Guides to gain a better understanding of the materials and quickly decide which records may be most relevant to their research.

REALTORS® Political Action Committee (RPAC)

Series B13:03

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In 1969, the National Association of REALTORS® launched the Real Estate Political Education Committee (REPAC) to “increase the political involvement and influence of its members.” REPAC’s purpose was to solicit voluntary contributions from NAR members, pool those funds, and from that pool make contributions to candidates running for public office at the national, state, and local levels. REPAC was also responsible for providing political education activities for members. In its first year, REPAC raised \$6,700 from NAR members and distributed these funds to federal candidates.

REPAC was maintained and operated separate from the Association, due to federal campaign laws, but in 1974 the Federal Election Campaign Act was amended and REPAC became the REALTORS® Political Action Committee (RPAC). RPAC became a formal, unincorporated, non-profit, bipartisan standing committee of the Association. By 1982, all 50 states plus the District of Columbia had executed one or another form of cooperative agreement with national RPAC and had state RPACs in operation. “After its modest beginnings less than 10 years earlier, RPAC contributions to federal candidates exceeded \$1 million for the first time in the 1977-78 election cycle. By 1979, national RPAC had grown to be the largest PAC in the United States in terms of contributions to federal candidates.”

Today, RPAC’s function remains the same. “RPAC’s mission is to identify candidates for elected office on the local, state, and national levels who will work with REALTORS® to promote and protect the American Dream of property ownership. Candidates who receive support from

RPAC are not selected based on their political party or ideology, but solely on their support of real estate issues.” RPAC develops sources of financial support from the membership of the National Association of REALTORS® and its affiliated State Associations and Local Boards which may be used to support those candidates for public office deemed most qualified in terms of “experience, integrity, and values.”

When RPAC was formed, it was lead by 18 trustees (all REALTORS® or REALTOR-ASSOCIATES®) appointed by the president of NAR. The trustees served three year staggered terms. 13 of the trustees represented the 13 regions of NAR, while five trustees served at large. In addition, three ex officio voting members served on RPAC: the chairman of the NAR Political Affairs Committee, the chairman of the REALTORS® National

Legislative Committee, and a State Association or Local Board Executive Officer appointed to serve as a liaison between the trustees and state/local board executive officers. The trustees determined which federal candidates national RPAC would support, as well as provided leadership in RPAC fundraising activities. State RPAC’s determined how to best use their share of the RPAC funds based on state political considerations and state election laws.

Today, RPAC is made up of several committees: RPAC Major Investor Council, RPAC Participation Council, RPAC Trustees Federal Disbursement Committee, and RPAC Trustees Fundraising Committee.

- RPAC Major Investor Council’s goal is to increase participation in all levels of RPAC’s Major Investor Program.
 - It is led by a Chair and a Vice Chair and made up of one REALTOR member per state and territory (FL, NY, TX, and CA have two members), as well as the Immediate Past Chair of the Council. There is also an Association Executives Committee representative, a commercial representative and a Young Professionals Network representative. In addition, the Chair may appoint members from groups such as the Women’s Council of REALTORS, Leadership Academy, the NAR Past Presidents and NAR Executive Committee. Each member, including the Vice Chair and Chair, serve one year terms. In total, the committee is approximately 68 members.
- RPAC Participation Council’s goal is to increase overall REALTOR® participation at all levels of RPAC.
 - It is led by a Chair and a Vice Chair and made up of one REALTOR member per state and territory (FL, NY, TX, and CA have two members), as well as the Immediate Past Chair of the Council. There is also an Association Executives Committee representative, a commercial representative and a Young Professionals Network representative. In total, the committee is approximately 66 members.
- RPAC Trustees Federal Disbursement Committee’s goal is to “enhance the political effectiveness of the National Association of REALTORS® by making direct contributions for the purpose of assisting real estate-supported candidates win election to federal

office; working collaboratively with state RPAC Trustees Committees to secure a request to mobilize REALTORS® in districts of RPAC-supported federal candidates; and urging the public through Independent Expenditures to support key federal legislators which is predicated upon first receiving a request to mobilize REALTORS® from the respective state Trustees.”

- Comprised of 18 members including a Chair, Vice Chair, the Immediate Past Chair, 1 representative from each region; 1 Association Executive Committee representative and 1 Association Government Affairs Director (GAD).
- The Chair, Vice Chair, and Immediate Past Chair serve a 1-year term. All other members serve for a staggered two-year term.
- RPAC Trustees Fundraising Committee’s goal is “to support the National Association of REALTORS® Public Policy Competency by setting fundraising policy and the RPAC Fundraising Goals.”
 - Comprised of 42 members, including a Chair, Vice-Chair, and Immediate Past Chair, 1 Association Executives Committee representative, RPAC Major Investor Council Chair, RPAC Participation Council Chair, Corporate Investor Council Chair, 2 members from the RPAC Major Investor Council, 2 members from the RPAC Participation Council, 2 representatives from each region (selected by the President and President-Elect), 1 affiliate representative, and 1 large broker representative.
 - Each member, including the Chair and Vice Chair, serve two-year staggered terms.

All RPAC committees report up through the RPAC Trustees Fundraising Committee. The RPAC Trustees Federal Disbursement Committee does not have any councils/forums that report to it. In addition, each state and local association has an RPAC that works with the national RPAC to raise voluntary contributions from NAR members and decide which candidates receive state/local RPAC support.

Collection:

The REALTORS® Political Action Committee archival collection can be broken down into the two major iterations of the committee: REPAC and RPAC.

REPAC served a dual role, both as a vehicle for fundraising and a committee to further NAR members political knowledge through education. Under REPAC, the Real Estate Political Education Committee (REPEC) was established. These two roles form the two sub-series of the REPAC archival materials.

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1. REPAC:
 - a. Fundraising
 - i. Three brochures titled, "action speaks louder than words"
 1. introduces REPAC, its activities, and how to join REPAC.
 - ii. A REPAC "Effective Political Action Campaign Kit"
 1. Includes sample speeches, letters, and fundraising materials
 - iii. "A Confidential Report on the 1974 Congressional Elections and the Participation of the Real Estate Political Action Committee" November 6, 1974
 1. Report prepared by REPAC that outlines the monetary support of REPAC and the results of those elections/campaigns
 - b. Education: Real Estate Political Education Committee (REPEC)
 - i. Political Education Series pamphlets
 1. A series of five pamphlets to educate REALTORS® about political basics; "Know Your Community," "Political Party Structure," "The Perfect Organization...and how it functions," "Working Within the Party," and "The Real Estate Political Education Committee Structure."
 - ii. Five pamphlets titled, "REPEC offers you the Impact of an Effective, Coordinated, National Political Education Program"
 1. Introduces REPEC, its activities, and how to join REPEC.
 - iii. A list of REPEC Life Members receiving award on November 14, 1972
 - iv. A blank "Cooperative Agreement" form for State REPEC's to join the national REPEC organization
 - v. "National and State Political Education Committees: A Question and Answer Summary on Organization and Operation" 1969
 1. A question and answer summary for state and national REPEC's to understand their organization, activities, and role in the larger REPEC organization.
 - vi. "Suggested Model Bylaws of the [state] Real Estate Political Education Committee"
 - vii. Two 1971 REPEC 99 Club pins

When REPAC became RPAC, it became a standing committee within the REALTOR® organization. The RPAC archival materials fall into several sub-series, including fundraising materials, political candidates and campaigns, promotional pamphlets and brochures, RPAC handbooks, and committee minutes and manuals.

2. RPAC
 - a. Fundraising: includes fundraising manuals for state and local associations, fundraising seminar materials, surveys of donors and fundraising issues, and donor program materials

- i. "The REALTOR® Independent Expenditures Program" information kit 1986
- ii. "Fundraising Handbook for State Associations and Local Boards of REALTORS®" 1987
- iii. "RPAC Fundraising and Participation Handbook" 1988
- iv. Survey results from a survey to "gauge public attitudes towards PACS and Independent Expenditures in general as well as the National Association of REALTORS®" 1988
- v. "RPAC is your PAC: REALTORS® Political Action Committee Fundraising Handbook" 1990 (3)

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- vi. National RPAC Fundraising Video talking points 1990s
- vii. "REALTORS® Political Action Committee Fundraising and Participation Seminar" 1991
- viii. "RPAC of Virginia Campaign Manual" 1993
- ix. Joint RPAC Fundraising/Political Affairs Seminar "Fundraising and Grassroots Power: The REALTOR® Dynamic Duo for 1993" 1993
- x. RPAC Fundraising/Political Affairs Seminar "RPAC and Political Affairs...A Pair of Aces" 1993

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- xi. "Survey on National, State, and Board RPAC Fundraising, Collection, and Spending Issues" report 1994
- xii. "Political Education Outreach and Fundraising Seminar" 1995
- xiii. "RPAC Fundraising and Political Outreach Seminar" 1996 (2)
- xiv. "Data from a Survey of 839 major donors to REALTORS® Political Action Committee" 2006
- xv. "Data from a Survey of 800 non-donating REALTORS®" 2006
- xvi. "Data from a Survey of 800 REALTORS® Political Action Committee donors" 2006

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- xvii. "RPAC: Your Best Investment in Real Estate" donor program informational kit 2010
- xviii. RPAC Soft Dollar Fundraising Work Group minutes and materials 2011
- xix. RPAC Hall of Fame Induction 2016
- xx. National RPAC Awards informational material, n.d.
- b. Political Candidates and Campaigns: informational materials about the Opportunity Race Program, candidate screening, establishing relationships with public officials, and campaigning for NAR/RPAC endorsed candidates
 - i. Opportunity Race Program informational packet 1985
 - ii. Candidate Screening Manual 1990
 - iii. Compilation of all federal Opportunity Race letters 1990
 - iv. Opportunity Race Program informational brochure 1992
 - v. "Opportunity Races: Association Political Involvement" handbook 1992
 - vi. "Political Communications Network: Establishing Relationships with Your Public Officials" handbook 1992
 - vii. "Draft of Recommended Guidelines for NAR Campaigning" n.d.
 - viii. RPAC Issues Conference Work Group minutes and materials 2013

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- c. Pamphlets and Brochures: RPAC promotional and informational pamphlets and brochures. Most give a general overview of RPAC, its goals and impact, and how to contribute.
 - i. "Be a Leader" 1975 (3 and a typescript)
 - ii. "action speaks louder than words" 1979
 - iii. "RPAC is IMPACT" 1979
 - iv. "The REALTOR® Independent Expenditures Program" 1985
 - v. "REALTORS® Everywhere are Asking About RPAC" 1986
 - vi. "5 reasons (and one great way!) to cast your vote for REALTOR® interests..." 1988 (4)
 - vii. RPAC Product Catalog 1990s (5)
 - viii. "Renovating for the Future" 1994 (7)
 - ix. "Your Best Investment in Real Estate" 1996 (5 and 3 sweepstakes passports)
 - x. "Protect Your Business, Make Your Voice Heard" 2000s
 - xi. "Empowering Our Membership—Protecting Our Industry" 2000s (2)
 - xii. "Tax Reform and Home Ownership: Important facts Congress and the American people should know" 2005
 - xiii. "RPAC: Promote and Protect" 2010 (2)
- d. RPAC Reference Manuals
 - i. REALTORS® Political Action Handbook 1975 (3)
 - ii. Political Action Handbook 1978 (2)
 - iii. RPAC Handbook 1980 (4)
 - iv. REALTORS® Political Action Committee Reference Manual 1990
- e. RPAC Marketing Materials
 - i. REALTORS® Political Action Committee Effective Political Action Campaign Kit 1975
 - ii. REALTORS® Political Affairs Month Projects 1976
 - iii. RPAC Pack: kit of ad slicks, logo clip art, solicitation coupons, and RPAC poster and brochure 1988 (2)
 - iv. RPAC Report newsletter 1988
 - v. "Renovating for the Future: Changes You Should Note About the National Association of REALTORS® Political Action Committee" 1990

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- f. RPAC Minutes and Manuals
 - i. REALTORS® Political Action Committee Minutes 1974-2000
 - ii. RPAC Trustee Manual 1979
 - iii. RPAC 10th Anniversary Dinner 1979
 - iv. REALTORS® Political Action Committee Annual Report 1980
 - v. Independent Expenditures Committee Minutes 1980-1993
 - vi. Federal Appointments Committee 1990-1993