



February 26, 2018

Governor Chris Sununu  
State House  
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Governor Sununu:

The New Hampshire Association of Realtors has concerns over current legislative action seeking to alter existing reciprocity requirements for professionals. We believe these efforts, while well-intentioned, would undermine consumer protections while placing New Hampshire real estate brokerages at a distinct disadvantage to our competitors in neighboring states.

These bills, if passed, will aid brokerages in adjacent states at the expense of New Hampshire's own real estate firms, as out-of-state licensees will be able to temporarily cross the border to practice while our licensees will not have similar access.

Realtors appreciate that the intent behind efforts to alter RSA 332-G is to address New Hampshire's workforce problem by making it easier for workers to relocate to the state. However, we don't agree that there is, in fact, a workforce shortage in the real estate industry, considering that the state has roughly 10,000 real estate licensees, more than 6,000 of whom are Realtors.

And were there a shortage, NHAR believes the existing reciprocity rules already allow for a simple, efficient and timely turnaround for licensing.

It is not difficult for a licensee in an adjacent state to complete an examination administered by the Real Estate Commission, comply with a criminal background check and demonstrate no record of unprofessional conduct. An applicant could be working in N.H. as a real estate agent within two weeks of beginning the process.

Allowing automatic or temporary licensing will permit someone with no familiarity or knowledge of New Hampshire real estate law or regulations to provide consumer guidance in what is, for most consumers, the largest financial investment they will make in their lifetimes is not in a consumer's best interest.

As an example, Massachusetts has significantly different statutory requirements for handling escrow money, septic inspections, disclosures of radon and arsenic contaminants, lead paint notification and abatement, condominium laws, security deposits and eviction proceedings, agent designation disclosure, state wetland rules and many others. A Massachusetts licensee could operate in New Hampshire without having to demonstrate knowledge of any of these real estate related statutes.

NHAR is prepared to work with your office and legislators to review current reciprocity procedures and seek additional ways to ensure New Hampshire remains business-friendly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gerry O'Connell".

Gerry O'Connell  
2018 President