



Indiana Association Helps Elect Five REALTOR® Champions to Statewide Offices – January 2013

It's always helpful to have a REALTOR® in the house...not to mention REALTOR® Champions in the state Senate and attorney general's office! In Indiana last year, five campaigns that received support from the Campaign Services division of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® swept to victory, assuring industry-friendly legislators just where the Indiana Association of REALTORS® (IAR) needs them.

Maggie McShane, Senior Vice President of Government Affairs for the 14,600-member association, began the process back in May. "NAR's REALTOR® Party staff was terrific, and with their veteran consultants, were with us every step of the way." At their recommendation, IAR consulted local counsel to make certain that the independent expenditure campaigns it was proposing to conduct were in line with Indiana election law. IAR also took the time and effort to set up a special non-profit campaign fund, which remains in place for future races.

Two of the candidates that IAR was supporting, incumbent state representatives Randy Truitt and Ed Clere, are actually IAR members – "Great assets to have in the Statehouse!" laughs McShane. Two incumbent state senators with key committee positions had been identified as REALTOR® Champions by IAR's executive committee, as well. The state's attorney general was also up for re-election, and the REALTORS® wanted to be there for him: in his first term, in response to the national foreclosure crisis, Greg Zoeller had worked closely with the industry in creating a Homeowner Protection Unit, and had proved himself a good listener to the concerns of REALTORS®.

"Normally, the amount of campaign funding from NAR is determined by the size of the state's membership," notes McShane, "and we're pretty small. But because our proposed candidates were of such high caliber (and probably helped by the fact that there are no elections in Indiana in 2013,) we were allowed to apply for extra support, enabling us to engage in three more races than we could have, otherwise."

The NAR funding paid for radio ads for all five candidates. "The consultants were fantastic!" McShane says. "Not only did they script and produce the ads, which were very 'glossy', but they handled the media buys, which is such a nuanced process that we simply could not have done it nearly as well, ourselves." She emphasizes that, beyond the actual funding from NAR, the benefit of the consultants' expertise makes it possible for relatively small associations to behave like big-time players.

All five office-holders won re-election, "a well spent investment," according to McShane. "The beauty of the independent expenditure campaign is that we're not just making a contribution. It's our initiative, our effort, and our campaign: we're showing the candidate that we're staking our name on his or her race. These folks can't do anything until they're elected," she continues, "so once they have been, they don't forget how much we've helped them."



For more information on the sweeping success of Indiana's independent expenditure campaigns, contact Maggie McShane, Senior Vice President of Government Affairs at the Indiana Association of REALTORS®, at mmcshane@indianarealtors.com or 317.408.3896.



Rep. Randy Truitt (left) talking with IAR Grassroots Manager, Eric Augustus, at the Indiana Statehouse.