



## **Pennsylvania Association Helps Elect Two REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Champions to the General Assembly – December 2012**

In politics, there are REALTOR<sup>®</sup>-friendly candidates, and then there are candidates who are actually REALTOR<sup>®</sup> members. This election year, the Pennsylvania Association of REALTORS<sup>®</sup> (PAR) protected and secured the seats of not one, but two of its own who serve in the Pennsylvania General Assembly.

Back in the primary, Representative Sue Helm of Dauphin County faced a serious challenge for her seat. A three-term incumbent, Helm had a very narrow victory in 2010, and when the local Republican Party came out in favor of her opponent, a state prosecuting attorney who happens to be the daughter of the local county judge, PAR sprang into action.

“Sue has been a great ally in the legislature and a tireless advocate for private property issues,” says Jennifer Shockley, PAR’s Political and Community Services Manager. “In fact, we didn’t actually have anything against her opponent, but as a REALTOR<sup>®</sup> herself, Sue is about as good a friend as REALTORS<sup>®</sup> could ask for in the House, and we were determined to give her our strongest possible support.”

That determination meant tapping into the resources of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS<sup>®</sup> Campaign Services Division, to conduct a vigorous independent expenditure campaign. NAR provided polling services, and a \$25,000 grant enabled PAR to conduct a strategic robo-call and send four targeted direct-mail pieces in support of its candidate. Representative Helm, who maintains her real estate practice in Harrisburg, won by more than 1,700 votes. She went on to win in the recent general election, as well, and continues her work for REALTORS<sup>®</sup> -- and all her constituents – in the General Assembly.

Also about to begin her fourth term in the Pennsylvania General Assembly is Representative Marguerite Quinn of Bucks County, outside Philadelphia. Quinn is a REALTOR<sup>®</sup> who, though not professionally active while in office, makes matters of private property rights and homeownership a priority in her work in the legislature. Earlier this year, when she took a strong stand for environmental regulation to protect Pennsylvania citizens in the face of possible Marcellus shale drilling, she received significant push-back, and PAR was concerned that the opposition might launch a serious attack in the campaign season.

“Not only is Marguerite a valuable ally in the House,” notes Shockley, “we recognize that she has the potential to achieve a leadership position there. Thanks to a \$25,000 independent expenditure from NAR, we were able to



support her campaign to the fullest.” With five direct mail pieces developed on Quinn’s behalf, PAR helped to assure her win of some 8,000 votes in November.

“Independent expenditure campaigns are unique in that the candidates and their campaigns aren’t supposed to be at all aware that they’re happening,” explains Shockley. “In order for such a campaign to work, the information must be scrupulously verified, and the messaging absolutely correct. We did this through examining legislative voting records and campaign websites, all by means that were available to the general public. It was a matter of getting the information out, to the right voters, at the right moment.”

Thanks, in part, to the “undercover efforts” of the state association, and NAR’s Campaign Services, Pennsylvania retains two REALTOR® champions in its legislature.

*To learn more about these victories, contact Jennifer Shockley, Political and Community Services Manager, Pennsylvania Association of REALTORS®, at [jshockley@parealtor.org](mailto:jshockley@parealtor.org) or 800.555.3390 x3007.*