



1615 New Hampshire Avenue NW Floor 3
Washington, DC 20009
202.626.0099

dcrealtors.org

**Fiscal Year 2022 Oversight
DC Real Estate Commission
Council of the District of Columbia
February 9, 2022**

Good afternoon-- thank you, Chair Bonds, Housing Committee, and staff. My name is Scott Reiter, and I am the CEO of DC Association of REALTORS®. DCAR represents over 3,000 real estate professionals in the District of Columbia. Our comments today will center around continuing education (CE) courses, licensing renewals, and the Real Estate Guaranty and Education Fund.

First, DCAR applauds the Real Estate Commission for successfully pivoting CE courses to a virtual platform; this allows licensees to remain in compliance with educational requirements and provides them with the flexibility to attend classes. Continuing to utilize a virtual platform will be a helpful regulatory benefit for real estate professionals. DCAR agrees that in-person courses have their own set of benefits; however, moving past the pandemic, we encourage the Commission to offer both virtual and in-person opportunities.

Moving on—last year, DCRA’s occupational and licensing division transitioned from having an outside vendor process licenses and renewals to a new in-house system.

Regrettably, this shift caused significant disruptions in professionals’ lives. First-time applicants and renewals were delayed from receiving their licenses by weeks--and in some cases--months. While the delays have been abated substantially, the transition has not been smooth for professionals operating in the District. We continue to, sparsely, receive reports of delays from members.

DCAR would like to thank Leon Lewis and Jonathan Kuhl for providing us with an official statement on the issue to help answer questions. Straightforward communication is essential. Our expectation is that the Real Estate Commission and DCRA continue to increase efforts in providing updates to the public regarding licensing changes.

Lastly, the Real Estate Guaranty Fund is a crucial consumer protection fund the Council created decades ago. This tool helps ameliorate situations where DC residents are victims of unlawful conduct in real estate transactions involving a licensee. The Fund also provides educational programs to help professionals improve their real estate proficiency to help avoid unlawful conduct. Unfortunately, the pandemic has inhibited regular classes, but our members look forward to seeing them resume. Presently, we are satisfied with the Guaranty Fund's posture and ask to be included in conversations surrounding proposed changes.

As always, thank you Chair Bonds and the Housing Committee for the opportunity to provide comments. DCAR would be glad to follow up with additional information and answer any questions.