



Senate Bill 350 - State Real Estate Commission - Continuing Education Requirements - Ethics and Professionalism

Position: Support

Maryland REALTORS® support SB 350 which would enhance the current ethics course required for the renewal of a State Real Estate licensee to include professionalism as well as expand the predatory lending content to other fraudulent real estate practices.

Real Estate licensees are required by law to take 15 hours of continuing education (C.E.) classes every two years. If a licensee has not completed the 15-hour C.E. requirement, the licensee is prohibited from renewing his or her license.

Currently, licensees are mandated by law to take certain C.E. classes, including a class on the Code of Ethics, which includes predatory lending. Other classes licensees are mandated to take for C.E. include: a class on recent law changes; a class on the law of agency and a class on Fair Housing laws.

The current Ethics requirement is a 3-hour class, and SB 350 will require teachers to add a professionalism component to the ethics class which will focus on teaching licensees respect for the public, property and peers, and conflict resolution.

The professionalism component is based primarily on the code of ethics but teaches practical applications that licensees should follow in their daily work, such as: clear and timely communication with parties in the transaction; respecting and protecting the property of homeowners; showing respect to parties in the transaction; and techniques to resolve conflict.

Because licensees are independent contractors, brokers cannot force the licensees to take a class that is not mandated by the current law. This bill will mandate that licensees are taught professionalism.

Maryland REALTORS® supports this legislation to increase licensee's professional conduct and ensure they are serving Maryland consumers at the highest levels.

For these reasons, Maryland REALTORS® urges a favorable report of SB 350.

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