



TEXAS REAL ESTATE COMMISSION

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PRESS RELEASE

KEY EDUCATION AND INTERNET ISSUES ADDRESSED; APPOINTMENTS TO ADVISORY COMMITTEES MADE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Public comments were received during a meeting of the Texas Real Estate Commission (TREC) on Monday, August 2nd, concerning major issues surrounding education courses for licensing of real estate brokers and sales persons.

Among detailed issues discussed was whether TREC should reduce the current ten hour core course daily class presentation limit, to a maximum of eight hours per day; or whether the agency should impose any hour limit at all on daily classroom attendance. Other questions included whether to allow open book versus closed book exams to determine if prospective license applicants have achieved an adequate understanding of required information.

On the matter of recertification of proprietary schools that teach real estate courses, information was presented regarding how periodic TREC approval of education providers could help monitor a school's current organization, financial condition, and operations. Concern was expressed, on the other hand, that submission of personal financial records from proprietary school owners would unnecessarily encroach upon individual privacy under state open records requirements.

Testimony was also heard regarding whether providers should be allowed to offer core or continuing education courses in a real estate broker's office. Points were argued, for instance, that some brokerage firms have developed high-quality training programs and have state-of-the-art training facilities available. However, inappropriate procedures and a compromise in quality

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may occur if students are subjected to business related distractions surrounding brokerage office activities, or if brokerage firms conduct improper recruitment of agents as a result of training programs offered.

Commissioners agreed to begin their rule amendment process by considering specific proposals on these and other key education concerns at its next meeting in September.

The Commission also moved to fine-tune a recently adopted rule requiring licensure for individuals located out-of-state who engage in real estate brokerage practices within Texas by way of the Internet or through other communication means. New language is now being proposed for adoption at the September meeting that will narrow the scope of required licensure for non-resident brokers. The amendment proposes requiring out-of-state individuals offering real estate brokerage services by way of the Internet, or other methods, to obtain a Texas license only if they are dealing with buyers and sellers who are legal residents of Texas, and the property is located at least partially within the state.

In other action, Commissioners made two new appointments to TREC's Broker-Lawyer Committee, as well as two appointments to the newly established Texas Mortgage Broker Advisory Committee under the recently enacted state Mortgage Broker License Act.

Ann M. Walker from Houston, along with Avis Wukasch of Georgetown, were appointed to the Broker-Lawyer advisory committee. Ms. Walker is a broker / owner of Keller Williams Realty, Greater Northwest, in Houston; and Ms. Wukasch, also a broker, is a sales manager for Prudential Owens Realty offices in Round Rock and Georgetown.

TREC appointed Ronald C. Wakefield of San Antonio, and Keno Torres from Houston, to serve on the Texas Mortgage Broker Advisory Committee. Mr. Wakefield is a real estate broker and CEO of MEGAMERICA Mortgage Group, Inc., in San Antonio. Mr. Torres is a real estate sales person and consultant with RE/MAX Professional Group in Houston.