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March 20, 2020

The Honorable Greg Abbott
Governor of Texas
P.O. Box 12428
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Governor Abbott,

On behalf of our more than 125,000 members across the state, Texas REALTORS® wants to thank and commend you for your strong leadership during the Coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic. Your administration has been faced with unimaginable circumstances and have met them with diligence and grace.

In addition to matters of health and safety, our Association is concerned about the potential impacts the pandemic will have on property owners and residents who are in the process of buying, selling, and leasing homes and other property throughout Texas. This public health crisis could result in the devastation of the real estate market, which in turn would have serious and long-lasting impacts to the state's economy.

In contemplation of further necessary limitations on local and state government services, we seek to minimize potential interruptions within the real estate industry by respectfully requesting that real estate-related services should be considered as essential under any future emergency orders. We are especially focused on the county clerk services needed to transfer and record property ownership, but also those services provided by other political subdivisions such as permitting, inspections, construction, and provision of information related to title searches.

Texas has long been a leader in innovative policies and technologies that allow for real estate-related business to be conducted with limited in-person contact, such as online notary commissions and prioritization of widespread broadband access. Our members across the state are already creatively utilizing web-based technology to hold meetings, conduct negotiations, share documents, and even show property virtually. However, those innovations will be for naught if other services related to real estate transactions, such as deed recordation, become unavailable.

There remains no doubt the Coronavirus pandemic will disrupt the lives Texas residents, but impacts that would be substantial, especially those that are financial, may be lessened if essential real estate services can be continued.

Texas REALTORS® stands ready as a partner to you and your administration, and we are eager to work together to protect our members, their clients, and all of Texas during this crisis. Thank you for your consideration.

Handwritten signature of Cindi Bulla in black ink.

Cindi Bulla
2020 Chairman of the Board
Texas REALTORS®

Handwritten signature of Travis Kessler in black ink.

Travis Kessler
Chief Executive Officer
Texas REALTORS®