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Though it has been quite some time since I was able to communicate with you in this newsletter, know that I think of each of you often. I hope this finds you well.

Since our last communication via the newsletter, so much has happened. We have all begun to fully absorb and understand the changes in our state and federal Association leadership; the alterations to business plans to address the numerous jury verdicts, judgments, and settlements concerning compensation structures; the ever-changing conditions in the real estate industry; and the impending changes to the standard form real estate agreement for our area. Truly, our industry is in a state of flux.

What I have observed is an understanding by all agents with whom I work of the need to confirm what each agent "brings to the deal". As I often cautioned before, make sure to continue to work hard, to continue to remain relevant, and to clearly re-establish your place as a REALTOR® in each and every real estate transaction. When I have talked with agency offices about the compensation structure, some have been surprised to learn that now, perhaps more than in the relatively recent past, each REALTOR® must remind the customer what services are provided. As a reminder to each agent, though the real estate industry remains collegial, you, individually and as a member of an office, need to constantly remind past and current clients what you do, as a professional agent, each and every day so that---in the future---when considering an agent, the customer includes you in the decision-making process. More and more I hear from new clients that they think they can do a real estate deal "on their own". I ALWAYS advise against this----I remind each client of the benefits of working with a REALTOR®. Anecdotally, when the initial jury award was publicized, I received anywhere from 5-9 emails each day from a blast email originating from an agent that either expressed 75 or 150 services provided by an agent in a transaction (not sure if the agents sending out the email with 75 services realized that, without looking into the list but relying solely on the number of services, they were STILL selling themselves short when compared to the email identifying 150 services). In any case, this effort to communicate and educate potential customers is still warranted and needed. Continue to be relevant. Continue to keep working hard. If you are having any difficulty, turn to fellow agents with more experience. He/She has lived through many ups and downs in the industry. Lean on him/her to help you understand what is going on and how to navigate through the situation.

Concerning the changes in leadership, solely from what I have read, it appears change was needed and likely was long overdue. The only point to stress is a reminder that each of you has worth and each of you deserves respect. Sometimes you have to be an advocate for yourself----and, in such instances, you are likely the best advocate you can possibly have!

Concerning the changing markets, in my opinion, nothing substantial will happen with the real estate market (interest rates, foreclosure market boom, etc) until after the November elections. If anything remarkable occurs (major adjustment in interest rates, release of foreclosure properties onto the

market, etc) and you are unsure how to adjust your business plan, please reach out to your fellow agents who have weathered similar “storms” during their service as agents. Each of you can provide a font of knowledge to other agents.

Thank you all for your continued hard work. Continue to be relevant. Continue to work on your business plan to remain in front of the changes in our industry. My continued best to each and all.

Take care,  
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**Gary S. Mueller, Esq.**



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