

## **A Trip to Congresswoman Jaime Herrera Beutler's D.C. Office**

By Linda McClellan, NAR Federal Political Coordinator for Congresswoman Jaime Herrera Beutler

Linda: This past month, President Terry Wollam, CEO Michele Holen and I traveled to DC to attend the 2011 NAR Midyear Conference. While there we had the privilege of meeting with Congresswoman Herrera Beutler. We were joined in her office by Randy Hunzeker, RMLS Director, and other Washington REALTORS.

Congresswoman: "It was a pleasure to see so many Washington and Southwest Washington faces when the REALTORS came to my Washington, DC office in May. I know I can rely on them for their expertise and experience when it comes to homeownership and community issues."

Linda: NAR had assigned us our mission and our message was clear, Home Ownership Matters. Our first matter of business was to thank Congresswoman Herrera Beutler for co-sponsoring H. Res. 25, resolving that the current Federal income tax deduction for interest paid on debt secured by a first or second home should not be further restricted. The Congresswoman was the first Member of Congress in Washington State to cosponsor the Resolution.

Congresswoman: "We discussed a wide array of topics, including the Qualified Residential Mortgage. I am happy to support the REALTORS and their desire to discourage difficult new standards that puts the dream of home ownership farther out of reach. I am also pleased to preserve the home mortgage interest deduction."

Linda: At the top of our list of policy priorities, was a request of the Congresswoman to sign on to The Sherman Campbell Letter, opposing increases in mortgage down payment proposed by regulators, a request she has paid heed to and signed on. Also, topping our list was a request to cosponsor H.R. 1498, which requires servicers to decide whether to approve a short sale within 45 days of completion of the short sale request and, to request a hearing on H.R. 1498 that will shine light on the short sales issue and identify ways to make short sales work better.

Talking points also included:

- The accessibility of affordable mortgage products, asking our Representative to oppose any decrease in FHA and GSE loan limits
- The future of the secondary mortgage, asking for comprehensive reform and a continued key role by the federal government

- The affordability and availability of property insurance, asking for reauthorization of the National Flood Insurance Program for at least five years

Congresswoman: “I look forward to our continued work. From access to credit to National Flood Insurance, I expect that we’ll continue to address important issues together.”

Linda: Congresswoman Jaime Herrera Beutler will be the guest speaker at The CCAR June Membership Meeting. She will be speaking about economic recovery and growth, and how those two elements play a critical role in reversing the downward trend of homeownership. This is a meeting that you will not want to miss. I strongly encourage you to attend, and bring a friend!