

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Contact: Kat Griffith or Walt Zaykowski

[kgriffith@echristianpr.com](mailto:kgriffith@echristianpr.com)

[wzaykowski@echristianpr.com](mailto:wzaykowski@echristianpr.com)

512.472.9599

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

# **Austin Board of REALTORS® offers aggregate MLS data for property valuations**

***The following statement is from the Austin Board of REALTORS®***

Today, the Austin Board of REALTORS® (ABoR) offered to provide the Travis Central Appraisal District (TCAD) with local aggregate housing market data, defined by zip code, in an effort to facilitate accurate and updated property valuations.

On February 12, TCAD Chief Appraiser Marya Crigler announced she would not be updating residential property appraisals in 2020, citing the fact that she was no longer able to access ABoR's proprietary Multiple Listing Service (MLS) data, which TCAD previously accessed through unauthorized means. This news impacts each of the taxing entities that rely on TCAD to value property, including local schools. ABoR's actions in protecting homeowners' privacy and the MLS in no way caused TCAD to be unable to update residential property appraisals. TCAD updated area appraisals for many years without use of MLS data. TCAD inappropriately pointed blame at ABoR for not having the ability to do their job, and even worse, indicated that ABoR is at fault for the negative impact on school budgets. This is simply not true.

Austin-area REALTORS® are strong supporters of our schools. Following TCAD's decision, we closely communicated with local school districts to set the record straight and ensure they have accurate information related to the rules and regulations that protect consumer privacy within the MLS. ABoR is committed to balancing the needs and interests of homeowners, our community, and our members. Standing up for our communities means both supporting our schools and the homeowners who live in those districts—it should never be one at the expense of the other.

In an effort to that end, ABoR has made TCAD aware that ABoR consistently provides local aggregate housing market data to the public. Rather than offering direct use of ABoR's proprietary MLS database, which would not serve the privacy interests of buyers and sellers and is not permissible under the rules and regulations of the MLS, the data we have offered can be defined by zip code, but not at an individual property level. To be clear, this aggregate data does not provide sold data for individual properties.

Texas is a non-disclosure state. Appraisal districts across Texas have a state mandate to set property values each year. To the best of our knowledge, every other appraisal district is conducting residential valuations this year. This includes nearby counties such as Bexar County, which has been cited as having no access to market data collected or provided by the San Antonio Board of REALTORS® MLS.

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