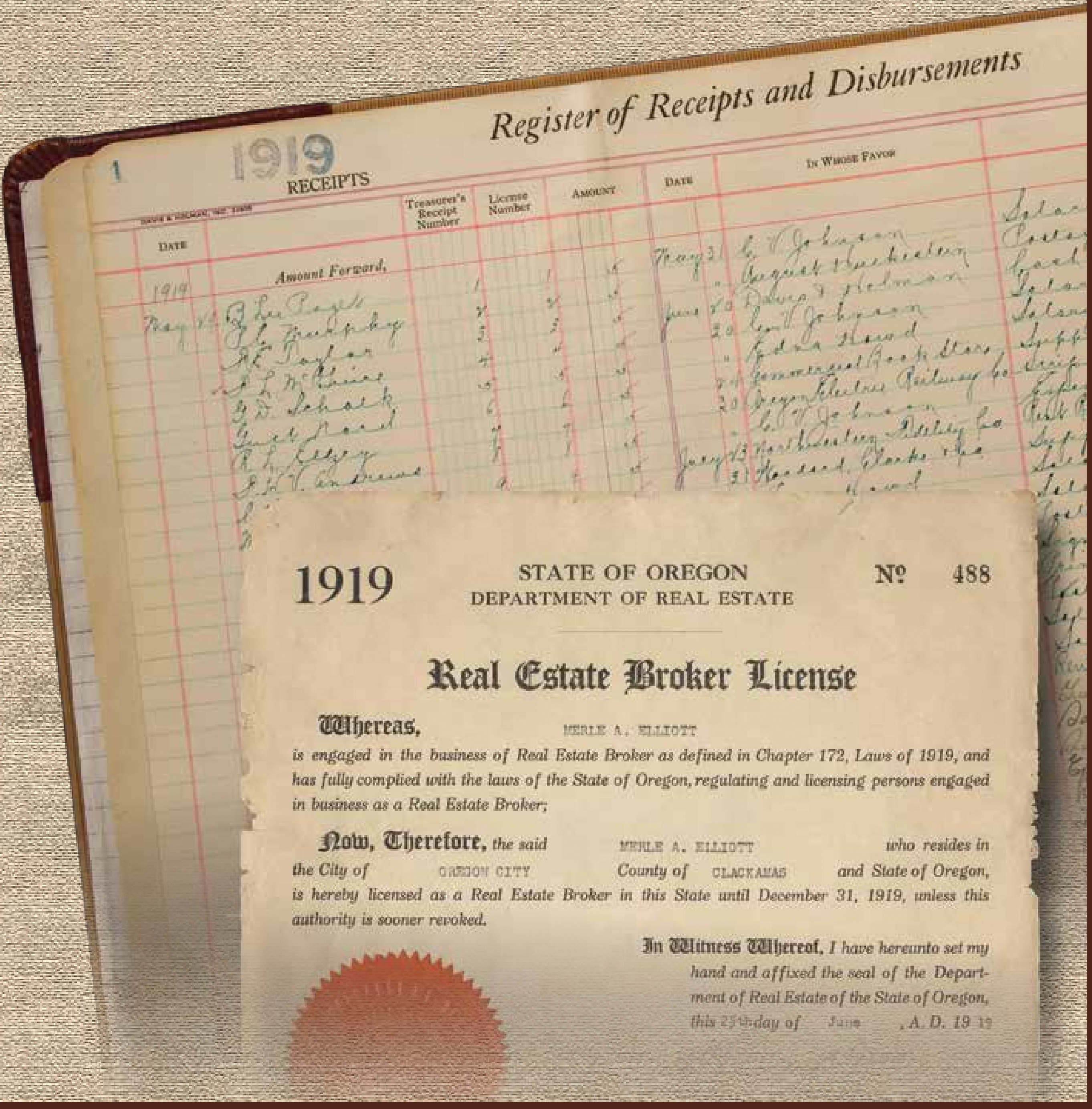
State of Oregon
Real Estate Agency

HISTORICAL CHRONICLE

A Leader in Real Estate Licensing for 95 Years



The Oregon Real Estate Agency

The Oregon Real Estate Agency is the state agency that licenses and regulates the activity of real estate brokers, principal brokers, property managers, escrow agents and real estate marketing organizations in Oregon. It is also responsible for registering campground membership brokers and approving condominium filings. Agency staff currently consists of 27 professional employees who carry out the mission of the Agency.

Agency's Mission

The mission of the Oregon Real Estate Agency is to provide quality protection for Oregon consumers of real estate, escrow, and land development services, balanced with a professional environment conducive to a healthy real estate market

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The State of Oregon has been a leader in passing many landmark laws: the Beach Bill, the "Bottle Bill," the Death with Dignity Act, and Vote-by-Mail. Oregon also passed the first effective real estate licensing laws in the United States.

In the last 95 years, Oregon has endeavored to protect consumers and promote a healthy environment for the real estate market. The Oregon Real Estate Agency is currently tasked with this important mission.

Although the following history is not comprehensive, it gives general feel for how real estate licensees have been regulated in Oregon and the historical context for many changes of real estate license law.

1919

1919

1919 began on the horizon of peace as the Great War came to an end overseas. On the home front, however, 1919 was an intense and uncertain year in United States' history: the flu pandemic ran rampant, claiming thousands of lives; race riots divided the nation; government oppression rose to historic levels as the Red Scare gripped society; the White Sox threw the World Series; and Congress enacted prohibition with the passage of the infamous Eighteenth Amendment, giving rise to organized crime and notorious gangsters such as Al Capone. It was during this tumultuous year that the Oregon Legislature passed the nation's first effective real estate regulatory license law.

On Valentine's Day, February 14, 1919, the Oregon House of Representatives passed House Bill 425, which restricted the right to engage in real estate brokerage to those who possessed certain qualifications of character and competency. The purpose of the new license law was to professionalize the real estate industry and weed out unqualified practitioners through the institution of practical supervision and honest business methods.

The bill was signed into law as Oregon Laws Chapter 172 by Governor James Withycombe on February 26, five days before his death from the flu. After the promulgation of the law, it became illegal for any person to engage in the business of a real estate broker without first obtaining a license from the state's Insurance Commissioner, who was put in charge of administering the new law and its provisions.

To obtain a broker's license in 1919, the applicant was obliged to pay an annual fee of $5.00, furnish a bond in the amount of $1,000 and supply a recommendation signed by ten freeholders[1] certifying that the applicant was "honest, truthful, and of good moral character."

Furthermore, since safeguarding the public in their acquisition and transfer of real estate was the ultimate objective of the real estate license law, anyone believed to be victimized by an allegedly dishonest or fraudulent real estate broker was encouraged to submit a complaint to the Insurance Commissioner, along with a $15.00 fee to cover the cost of a hearing. Once a complaint was filed, the Commissioner would refer it to the District Attorney, who would arrange for a hearing in Circuit Court. The court was given sole authority to revoke or suspend a license. In the case of a suspension, the maximum penalty was six months. A violation of any of the provisions of the license law was punishable by a fine no less than $25.00 or more than $500.00. On May 29, 1919, the new real estate license law went into effect.

[1] *A freeholder is someone who has a fee simple interest in real property.*

By the end of the first day, 957 applications had been received, and C. V. Johnson, manager of the Real Estate Department, began the arduous task of processing all the applications. License No. 1 was issued June 6, 1919 to B. Lee Paget, who became the nation's first lawfully regulated real estate broker. At the end of the first year, a total of 1,537 real estate brokers had been licensed in Oregon.

Department Rule No. 1 was promulgated during the law's first year of existence on August 12, 1919. This rule permitted a real estate broker to employ a salesman. The employment was probationary for a period of thirty days and required the broker to notify the Real Estate Department of the employment. At the end of the thirty-day period, the salesman had to either apply for a broker license or be dismissed. If he was dismissed, he could not accept employment with another broker for one year. This rule was revoked less than two years later on June 1, 1921.

1920s

1920s

A decade suspended between WWI and the Great Depression, the 1920s offered a brief pause for fun and enjoyment. Economic prosperity and new opportunity marked the decade for most Americans.

The ratification of the 19th Amendment was especially noteworthy in signaling new opportunities for American women. After a long, hard-fought battle, women were legally given the right to vote on August 18, 1920.

The advent of the mass-produced automobile, notably the Model T, gave millions of ordinary Americans the opportunity to take to the open road and discover a new level of freedom and mobility. By 1920, one in ten Oregonians owned a car.[i] In addition to the automobile, the invention of radios, movies, and household appliances drastically transformed American's daily lives and ushered in the era of mass consumer culture.

The cultural values were not the only facet of the American way of life that was changing in the 1920s; the nation's demographics were shifting as well. The 1920 U.S. Census indicated that for the first time in the nation's history urban people outnumbered those living in rural areas and small towns.[ii] By the end of the decade, more than half of all Oregonians lived in urban areas.[iii]

The booming real estate market of the 1920s provided a good indication of the prosperous mood of the decade. These booms occurred in many parts of the country, but none of the activity could match the mania that propelled the development of properties in Florida. In the first part of the decade, land in Florida that was bought for $800,000 resold for $4 million within one year – a 600 percent return![iv] With returns like this, everyone wanted an opportunity to cash in on the craze. However, the supply of people willing to pay such inflated prices for property eventually came to a halt. With thousands of sellers and very few buyers, prices started to abruptly fall, causing the housing bubble to burst in 1926. Even in Oregon, building activity dropped drastically, going from $38 million in 1925 to less than $15 million in 1929.[v] Construction would not recover much until after the war in the late 1940s.

During the 1920s, the Oregon real estate license law underwent several key changes. On May 25, 1921, the Oregon Legislature officially repealed the 1919 law and formally created a Real Estate Department within the Insurance Department, making the Insurance Commissioner ex-officio Real Estate Commissioner. The new law was known as the "Real Estate Brokers' License Law."

The commissioner now had "full power to regulate and control the suspension and revocation of license," thereby taking this authority away from the Circuit Court. With the change in the manner of handling complaints, the new law eliminated the necessity of respondents paying a $15.00 fee when filing a complaint. The penalty for a violation of the new law was a fine of up to $500.00 or a jail sentence of ninety days in the county jail.

The license law was again liberally amended in 1925, and for the first time salesmen were given legal status. Furthermore, the number of licensed real estate brokers in 1925 reached an all-time high of 2,684, a number that was not to be exceeded for thirty-one years.

In 1929, the Real Estate Brokers' License Law was amended again, becoming Oregon Law Chapter 423. Most important of the changes was increasing the bond to $2,000. In this year, the Legislature also gave the commissioner authority to make rules and regulations. It was also provided that an applicant for a broker's license must be at least 21 years of age, and an applicant for a salesman's license at least 18 years of age.

Another significant revision made in the 1929 law was the addition of Section 27(j), which for the first time recognized and defined the term "realtor" in law. The new provision stated "using the term 'Realtor' by one not a member of the National Association of Real Estate Boards" was a cause for suspension, cancelation or revocation of a license. The addition of this provision was in line with the stand taken by Insurance Commissioner Claire Lee. In 1927, Commissioner Lee ruled that persons misusing the term "Realtor" were guilty of fraud and would be denied renewal of their licenses.[vi] The commissioner's ruling was based on the fact that the public assumed that the term "Realtor" indicated board membership and pledged individuals using it to conduct their business in accordance with the code of ethics of the National Association of Real Estate Boards.

At the end of the decade, Commissioner Lee stated his contentment of where the real estate profession was heading in Oregon in the forward of the 1929 "Roster of Licensed Real Estate Brokers and Salesmen":

> *The vocation of Real Estate Broker is on a much higher plane in this state than it was a few years ago. The public is coming to understand that the real estate broker of today is an expert in his calling, whose services are in the interest of his client even after he has earned and received his commission. May he live long and prosper and ever advance the welfare of the people of his state.*

The good times of the 1920s abruptly came to an end in October 1929. The crash of the stock market sent shock waves throughout the U.S. economy and drastically changed the lives of millions of Americans. Businesses closed their doors, factories shut down, houses went into foreclosure, and banks failed, marking a decade of great despair and uncertainty.

1930s

1930s

In the 1930s, the United States went from a land of prosperity and hope in the 1920s to a land of desperation and despair. The decade presented Americans with some of the toughest challenges they had ever faced. It began with a prolonged economic depression and ended with the start of World War II. In between, organized crime rose as gangsters continued to take advantage of prohibition laws, once-fertile farmland in the heart of the nation was turned into a dust bowl, and labor disputes pitted striking workers against management's strikebreakers.

After the stock market crashed in 1929, the economy hit rock bottom. Americans soon found themselves in the unrelenting grasp of an economic crisis. By 1932, approximately one out of four Americans were unemployed, millions lost their savings and every day became a struggle to survive.[vii] More than a million homeowners faced foreclosure, new construction came to a near standstill, and mortgage funds dried up. As a result, the housing market plummeted in the 1930s.

In an effort to stabilize the nation's failing economy, President Franklin Roosevelt enacted a series of economic programs known collectively as the New Deal. To assist the housing marking in particular, he introduced the National Housing Act of 1934. The new act created the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), which was tasked with stimulating the housing industry. When the FHA was created, limited mortgage loan terms and difficult repayment schedules made the purchasing process especially difficult for buyers in a depressed economy.[viii] To address this issue, the FHA began offering federal mortgage insurance and regulating interest rates. The new government-insured mortgages provided much-needed stability to the housing market and played an important role in increasing home ownership after the depression.[ix]

The historically low number of licensed real estate brokers in Oregon during the 1930s was a testament to the impact the Great Depression had on the housing market. In 1934, the number of licensed real estate brokers in Oregon dropped to 981, the lowest in the history of the state.

Another way the Great Depression affected the Real Estate Department was the adoption of the "Code of Fair Competition for the Real Estate Brokerage Industry" as part of the rules and regulations of the department. This "Code" was part of the "National Industrial Recovery Act," the Federal government's frontal attack on unemployment and included standards regarding maximum hours of labor, minimum rates of pay, and working conditions.

Another significant change that occurred during the decade was the granting of independent status to the Real Estate Department in 1939 with the passages of the Real Estate Brokers' License Act of 1939 (1939 Oregon Laws Chapter 380). No longer under the Insurance Division, the newly independent department was to be headed by a commissioner appointed by the Governor for a four year term.

On June 14, 1939, Claude H. Murphy became the first Real Estate Commissioner. He would serve under four Governors.

Claude H. Murphy
1939 - 1950

The commissioner was to be assisted by a Real Estate Board, of which he would be chairman. The Board was to be composed of four members, also appointed by the Governor. The first Real Estate Board consisted of W. B. Shively, Will H. Ross, Lowell Williamson, and Carl Y. Tengwald. The most important duty of the new Real Estate Board was preparing, conducting, and grading license examinations, which all applicants now had to pass before becoming licensed.

A new provision to the Act allowed a broker or salesman to apply for a temporary permit until the next examination date (this was repealed in 1941). The law also required all applicants be at least 21 years of age and be "trustworthy and competent."

The first Real Estate Board meeting took place on June 23, 1939 and was primarily an organizational meeting. The morning session was held in Salem, and the afternoon session was in Portland. Thereafter, board meetings were held in Portland at the state office building three times a year until 1967. During the first meeting, members spent most of the day developing exam questions. The board also established the passing grade of 70 percent. Exams were graded during regular board meetings. Depending on the number of exams, meetings could last until late in the evening.

In 1931, the licensee directory sent out by the Department contained for the first time an instructional section, thereby becoming the first *Real Estate Manual*. Under the heading "elementary law for real estate brokers," the editor of the Manual advised readers to "ever remember that the brokers' contract must be in writing."

1940s

1940s

The Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, shattered U.S. isolationism and thrust the United States into WWII. On the home front, heavy war production pulled the nation out of the Great Depression and brought women out of the home and into the workforce en mass for the first time. Furthermore, the country's balance was significantly altered during this time by the mass migration of people to the West to work in war-related industries such as shipbuilding.

The Kaiser Shipyards in Portland attracted a significant number of newcomers and in the span of months, Portland's population swelled by one-third with the addition of an estimated 160,000 residents.[x] During the decade, Oregon led all states with a 41.9 percent population gain and the entire Pacific Coast became the fastest growing section of the United States. On November 14, 1947, Governor John Hall wrote a letter addressing the important role real estate licensees were to play as the influx of people into the region continued during post-war years:

To the Real Estate Men and Women of Oregon:

> *Real Estate people are often among the first who come into contact with new citizens establishing themselves in Oregon. As such, you are, in effect, "Ambassadors of Goodwill," and your high standards and code of ethics are doubly important. Oregon, with its great resources and magnificent natural beauties, has much to offer the newcomer. Many have made their homes here in recent years, and many more will soon settle here. I know the Real Estate profession will continue to build and maintain those safeguards of fair practice which are so important, and which will bring credit to you and to the state as a whole.*

At war's end in 1945, soldiers began returning home and placing great strain on available living spaces. The growing national economy, in conjunction with individuals' increased purchasing power, helped fuel the postwar housing boom needed to accommodate returning servicemen and the growing population. The federally administered GI Bill was of particular importance in precipitating soldiers' demands for housing by offering soldiers federally insured, zero down payment home loans.[xi]

A phenomenon of the postwar housing boom was the modern American suburb comprised of tract houses. One of the most prominent suburban developments was Levittown, New York, which served as a prototype of mass-produced housing that came to symbolize the American homeowner's dream.

Given the nation's preoccupation with the war for the first half of the decade, it is not surprising that the Oregon Real Estate License Law did not undergo significant changes during the 1940s.

At the beginning of the decade, the law was amended slightly to permit the Real Estate Board to print and circulate education matter among all licensees.

Another minor change occurred in 1947 when the law was amended to require that examinations be not less frequent than every sixty days. Previously, examinations were required by law only four times a year in Portland and Salem; however, exams were administered in other locations when there were sufficient applicants.

The 1947 amendment also gave the authority to the Real Estate Commissioner to regulate business chance brokers.

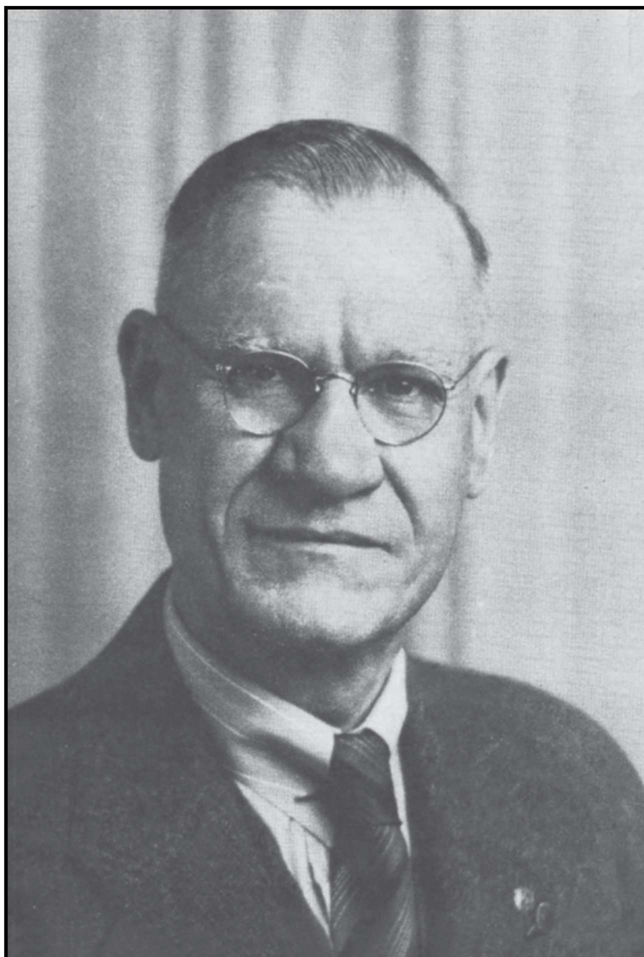
December 1948 marked the publication of Volume 1, Issue No. 1 of the *Oregon Real Estate News*. (The publication was renamed the *Oregon Real Estate New-Journal* in 1974.)

1950s

1950s

During the 1950s, the economy continued to thrive and the majority of Americans experienced a standard of living earlier generations had only dreamed about. One of the factors that fueled the prosperity of the decade was the increase in consumer spending. The fruits of this prosperity included new cars, suburban houses, and televisions.[xii] The booming prosperity of the 1950s helped create a widespread sense of stability and contentment in the United States.

These sentiments, however, were contrasted with prevailing feelings of uncertainty and conflict spurred by the Cold War and the burgeoning civil rights movement. Due to the Cold War, Americans were fearful of nuclear attack by the Soviet Union and the spread of communism at home and abroad. And, following the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* case and Rosa Parks' refusal to give up her seat on a city bus to a white person, the struggle against racism and segregation entered the mainstream of American life.[xiii]



Al J. Crose
1950 - 1953

Furthermore, the "greatest public works project in history" – the Interstate Highway System – was authorized in 1956, which when completed allowed for greater travel and connected the nation in a way that it never had been before.[xiv]

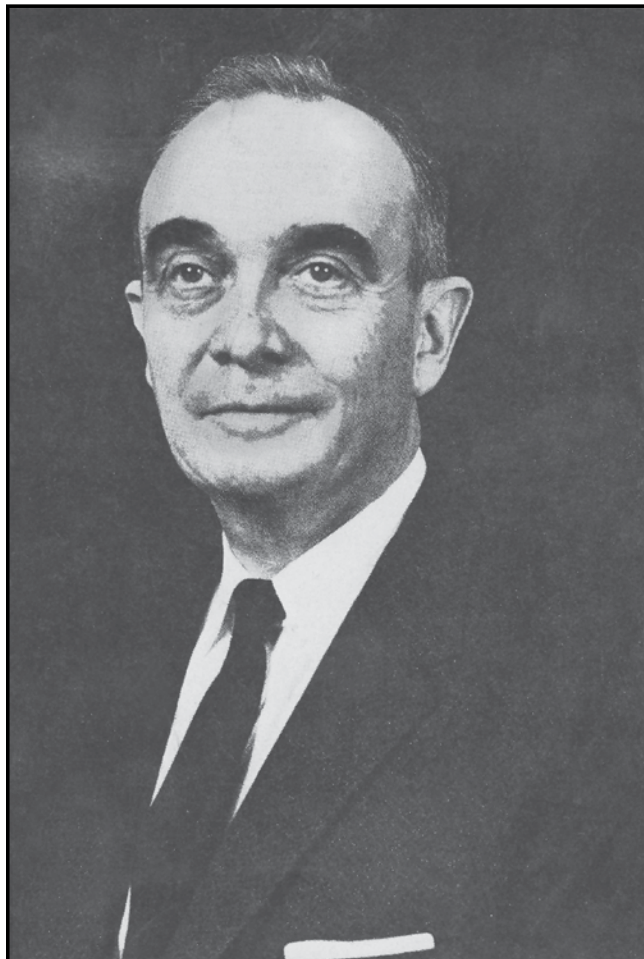
The Oregon Real Estate License Law underwent several changes during the 1950s. On March 16, 1950, Al J. Crose, a veteran state administrator, was appointment by Governor Douglas McKay as Real Estate Commissioner. Commissioner Crose worked hard during the 1951 Legislative Session, advocating for generous in-service education for all licensees and tighter controls over money belonging to brokers' clients.

As a result of his efforts, the Legislature increased broker and salesmen annual license renewal fees and created a fund for education. Specifically, the new law said the Commissioner could expend an amount not to exceed $2.50 of each license fee for the purpose of distributing printed matter of an education nature and conducting educational meetings for the benefit of licensed brokers and salesmen.

On May 23, 1951, the Real Estate Board adopted a long list of rules and regulations covering the conduct of real estate licensees. Among the new regulations was the requirement for each broker to have a clients' trust account as a means of providing greater protection of consumers' money. Another rule made it necessary for an applicant for a real estate license to furnish the Commissioner with a credit report, for which the applicant paid the fee.

Provision was made in the 1951 law to allow the licensing of non-residents if the home state of the nonresident would grant similar rights and privileges to Oregon licensees. This first step at reciprocity attracted favorable response from only a few states.

In 1953, the Real Estate License Law was amended again to permit an Oregon broker to cooperate with an out-of-state broker in the sale of property within Oregon. This amendment permitted the Oregon broker to pay an out-of-state broker a "finders' fee."



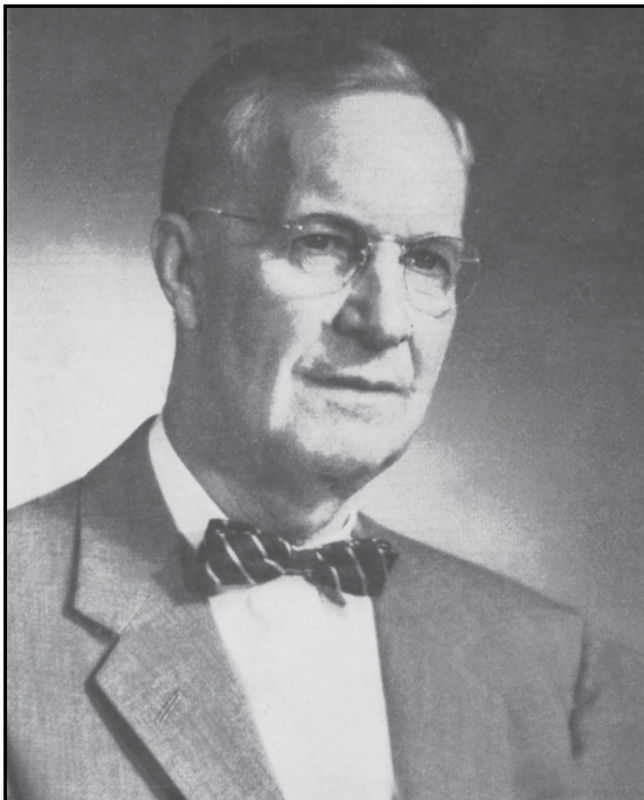
Ragnor O. Johnson
1954 - 1956

Another provision of the 1953 amendment provided for the licensing of associate brokers and non-resident salesmen.

Led by real estate men and women of the state, the drive for closer supervision of routine transactions of real estate brokers, a larger educational program, and stronger qualifications for applicants reached a peak during the 1955 Legislative Session.

Representative Robert J. Jensen of Portland led a group of legislators that included William W. Bradeen, Burns; R. F. Chapman, Coos Bay; Ward H. Cook, Portland; and Leon S. Davis, Hillsboro. The group introduced House Bill 465 on March 1, 1955, making 11 major changes to the Real Estate License Law, now known as Oregon Revised Statutes Chapter 696. All but Representative Chapman were real estate licensees.

Under the new law, an increase in fees made possible the employment of a Chief Field Examiner and four assistants, headquartered in the Portland office. This allowed for regular, periodic audits of brokers' offices.



Clarence F. Hyde
1957 - 1959

Furthermore, the educational program was upgraded by an increase in the $2.50 per license contribution to $3.50. An Educational Fund was established as a continuing appropriation.

Another important change made by the 1955 legislation was to increase the period of apprenticeship to two years before a salesman became eligible for a broker license.

In 1957, Oregon passed one of the first fair housing laws in the nation. The law prohibited property owners or their agents receiving public funds to discriminate "solely based on race, color, religion, or national origin." In 1959, the law was expanded to include any "person who as a business enterprise sells, leases or rents real estate."[xv]

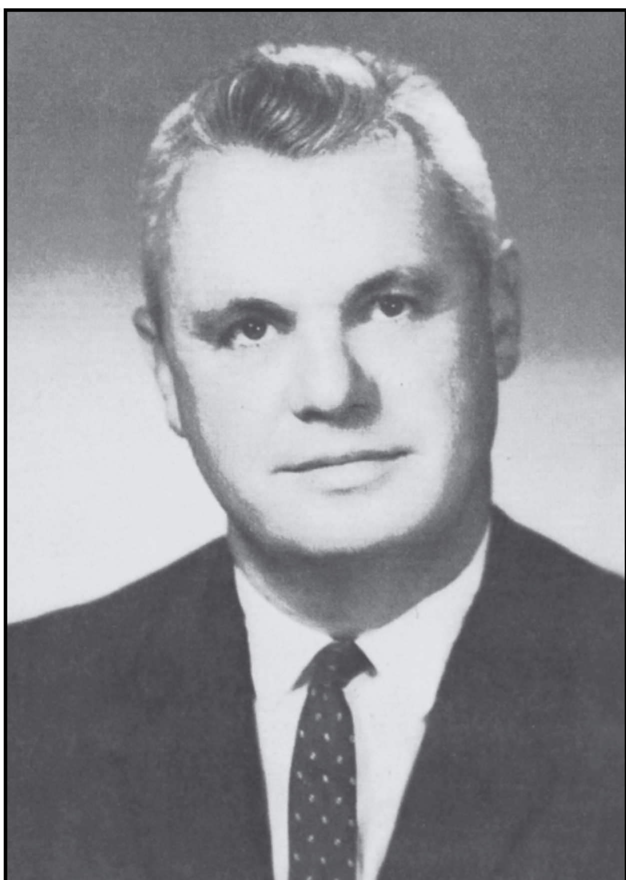
1960s

The 1960s was a tumultuous decade marked by reform and revolution. The post-World War II baby boom resulted in millions of teenagers coming of age during the decade, which had a significant impact on the fashion, fads, and politics.[xvi] These teenagers embraced “free love” and welcomed the “British Invasion,” which had a profound effect on American culture.

The decade witnessed the assassination of two transformative leaders, President John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr.

Sparked by President Kennedy’s speech to Congress in 1961, the United States’ entered into the Space Race in earnest. It culminated with Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin’s historic walk on the moon in 1969.

The Reverend Dr. King was a leader in the African-American Civil Rights Movement. The campaign, characterized by nonviolent protest and civil disobedience, resulted in the promulgation of both the Civil Rights Act of 1964, formally ending segregation based on race, and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, prohibiting barriers designed to discourage voting such as literacy tests and poll taxes.



Robert J. Jensen
1960 - 1966

The 1961 Legislature amended the Real Estate License Law to require an applicant for a real estate license to be 21 years old, an Oregon resident and a citizen of the United States. To correct a growing abuse of “license rental,” the Legislature also ordered brokers to surrender their licenses when they moved outside the state. An absence from the state of more than 90 days was considered termination of residency, unless satisfactory evidence was provided to the Real Estate Commissioner to show that such an absence was only temporary.

Another change made to the 1961 license law required that an applicant who failed two successive license examinations had to wait one year before making a third attempt. Furthermore, a “crime of moral turpitude” was added to the list of offenses that could be grounds for revocation or suspension of a license.

At the end of 1961, Oregon had reciprocal licensing agreements with the states of Colorado, Idaho,

1960s

Missouri, Nebraska, New York, South Dakota, and Washington. The reciprocal privilege was quite frequently exercised by brokers in Oregon, Washington and Idaho.

In 1963, Oregon state government was undergoing reorganization. During this period, the Department of Commerce was created. It absorbed a number of independent regulatory agencies, including the Real Estate Department. In this reorganization, the Real Estate Department lost its identity as an independent department and became the Real Estate Division.

To head the new Department of Commerce, Governor Mark O. Hatfield appointed Hillman Lueddemann from Portland as Director. Mr. Lueddemann had held a real estate license since October 15, 1919. Under the reorganization, the authority to appoint a Real Estate Commissioner was moved from the Governor to the Director of the Department of Commerce. On July 1, 1964, Director Lueddemann appointed Robert J. Jensen as Real Estate Commissioner.

The 1963 Oregon Legislature passed several laws affecting the real estate industry, including real estate license law.

One of the most important of the new laws passed in 1963 was the Subdivision Control Law. Prior to passage of the law, unscrupulous subdivision developers would advertise acres and acres of remote and undeveloped parcels to the public, often through the mail. Material facts about the property, such as freezing temperatures, lack of water, and distance from nearest town, were omitted from the deceptive mail-order literature. Frequently, buyers in search of cheap investment property would buy the land without seeing it. The Subdivision Control Law gave the Real Estate Commissioner the authority to regulate the sale, lease, and advertising of subdivided lands marketed to Oregon citizens whether the properties were situated in or outside the state.[xvii]

John E. Black
1967 - 1971

Administrative duties of the Real Estate Commissioner were further expanded by the passage of the Escrow Agents' Law. Administration of this law was entrusted to the Real Estate Commissioner.

Additionally, the Real Estate License Law had long exempted certain persons from the requirements of licensing. One of the exemptions covered the "regular employees" of builders or contractors, and had been the source of much misunderstanding. The 1963 Legislature removed this exemption.

The "temporary permit," which permitted employment of a salesman for a period of 60 days prior to an examination had long been controversial, and this privilege was also removed by the 1963 Legislature.

In 1967, Real Estate Board meetings began to convene regularly in Salem.

1970s

Despite the milestones of the 1960s, the 1970s were marked by failures both abroad and back home. Spurred by the momentum of the Civil Rights movement, other marginalized groups, particularly women, pushed for the same equality and recognition under law. But their efforts failed to generate the same political support.

President Richard Nixon's resignation in 1974 after the Watergate scandal was the first time a president had stepped down from power. His decision punctuated the United States' withdrawal of troops from Vietnam that started in 1973, ending an unpopular era of foreign intervention and controversial military actions.

War veterans returned home to poor public support and little government compensation. Draft evaders fled to Canada and Europe to avoid prosecution in the United States. It wasn't until 1977 that President Jimmy Carter pardoned draft dodgers, prompting many to return home to the states without consequence.

The United States saw a mass demographic shift that began after World War II. People gradually migrated from larger industrial areas in the North and Midwest to suburban areas stretching from the Southeast to the Southwest, including California. The population of these "Sunbelt" areas spiked dramatically in the 1970s. Many relocated to escape the pollution and crime of city life, but also to protest high taxes, ineffective social programs, and what they viewed as a stagnating economy that these industrial towns symbolized.[XVIII]

Environmentalism swept through the United States with the first celebration of Earth Day on March 21, 1970. Oregon looked for ways to preserve its scenic beauty. As suburbanization ramped up in southern California, it provided Oregon with a painful reminder of the dangers of metropolitan expansion. Faced with growing calls for action, Governor Tom McCall pushed for legislation that would protect and manage the state's limited space, and keep Oregon cities from sprawling.

On March 6, 1969, Senate Bill 10 was passed, making Oregon the second state to require local government planning and the first to require land zoning.[xix] A similar bill, Senate Bill 100, was passed on May 29, 1973, expanding the provisions for land management and conservation that SB 10 had put in place. SB 100 closed the loopholes in its predecessor and created the Land Conservation and Development Commission to ensure the bill's criteria were met by each local government's plan.[XX]

On September 10, 1971, Oregon became the first state to make nine hours of annual, real estate-oriented education a requirement for real estate brokers and salesmen to renew their licenses. This set education standards for licensees to remain up-to-date with the best practices in a constantly changing real estate market. The requirement was raised further to 24 hours of continuing education on October 1, 1976.

1970s

William Gwinn
1979 - 1982

In 1977 the Oregon legislature made more changes to real estate license law. The requirement of a high school education was eliminated. Additionally, starting October 4, 1977, salesperson license applicants had to demonstrate competence in real estate law, real estate practice, and finance, while broker license applicants had to demonstrate competence in two new areas – real estate office management and the supervision of staff.

After five years of service, Commissioner John E. Black was succeeded in 1972 by Fred H. Layman. In 1973, Mr. Layman retired, and M.J. Holbrook became commissioner. He was followed by Gordon W. Burbee in 1975 and William F. Gwinn in 1979.

The *Oregon Real Estate News* was renamed the *Oregon Real Estate New-Journal* in 1974.

1980s

The 1980s marked a political turning point in the United States with the election of President Ronald Reagan in 1980. "New Right" conservatives and disaffected liberals saw Reagan as a fresh perspective on dealing with the country's woes.

In an effort to reinvigorate the economy, President Reagan downsized the government, deregulated industry, and provided tax cuts for businesses and individuals in the top tax brackets. These policies corresponded with the average American's growing concerns over economic prosperity, especially for some college-educated baby boomers – "yuppies," as they were branded – whose stable incomes supported their expensive tastes and materialistic lifestyles.

In 1981, the United States faced its largest recession since the Great Depression. Interest rates peaked as the Federal Reserve, operating under a new monetary policy, tried to fight the soaring inflation that persisted from the 1970s by raising mortgage rates. With mortgage rates uncomfortably, yet intentionally, high, the housing market froze. Many prospective new homeowners had to wait until the economy could recover before they could buy.

While not the first "personal computer" on the market, the IBM PC, developed in 1981, was the first commercially successful computer to make use of microprocessor technology, creating an explosion of interest in the personal computer market. Compared to older models whose prices could number in the millions of dollars, the IBM PC cost only $1,565, making it more accessible for both business and personal use.

In 1983, ten years after the first mobile phone demonstration, cell phones were commercially available, yet unaffordable to the average consumer. Despite its inaccessibility to most Americans, the technology was revolutionary. It was in some ways a response to the growing trend of telecommuting, allowing business to move with employees outside the office. As prices dropped and technology advanced in the coming decades, owning cell phones evolved from a convenience for the rich to a near necessity. New home buyers could communicate with real estate licensees while touring homes and neighborhoods, making real estate more interactive, more convenient, and changing the way houses were marketed and sold.

Commissioner Gwinn left his position in 1983 to become Administrator of the State Housing Division. The new commissioner, Morella R. Larsen, was the first woman commissioner. She was the longest active commissioner in the history of the agency, holding her position for almost 12 years from 1983 to 1995.

In 1987, the Department of Commerce was dissolved. The Real Estate Division was renamed the Oregon Real Estate Agency.

1980s

Morella Larson
1983 - 1994

ORS 696.301(9), which prohibited licensees from selling property by offering "free lots," conducting lotteries, holding contests, offering prizes, or engaging in any practice that "induced" a real estate sale, was repealed by Senate Bill 243 in 1981. Lotteries, however, remained illegal under the Oregon Constitution.

On October 3, 1989, Oregon Real Estate License Law was changed to require license applicants to submit to a background check, including fingerprinting.

Also in October 1989, the Real Estate Commissioner was given authority to assess civil penalties to persons performing unlicensed professional real estate activities. Previously, these persons were subject to criminal prosecution. While unlicensed activity remained a Class A Misdemeanor subject to prosecution, the Real Estate Commissioner now had authority to assess a fine for such unlicensed activity.

1990s

The recession of the 1980s was a distant memory at the turn of the decade when the Cold War between Russia and the United States finally ended.

The population increase in the 1990s was the largest in American history, growing by 13.2 percent by the year 2000 to account for over 280 million people.[xxi]

More than any decade before it, the 1990s were a time of connection. The Internet, once an exclusive tool for American defense researchers to combat the Russian threat, rose to prominence in the late '80s and early '90s with commercial Internet service providers in the United States. As more countries tapped into the Internet, it globalized communication in a way telephone services never could by removing long distances from the equation completely.

In 1998, for the first time, the average selling price of a personal computer was less than $1000. Coupled with the gradual expansion of Internet access, investors quickly saw the profit potential in this new technology, giving businesses a new medium through which to expand. In a bid to exploit the Internet craze, companies found that their stocks soared by adding ".com" to their name. The popularity of these "dot-coms" gave rise to the day-trader as a full-time profession that banked off of rapid change and speculation in the stock market.

Artificial inflation was the result of such hype, however, and the dot-com bubble popped by the year 2000. Many businesses lost their fortunes toward the turn of the century when the craze died. Some companies such as Amazon rebounded and continued to prosper, while others fell into obscurity.

Oregon saw important changes to its property tax code in 1996 and 1997. Ballot Measures 47 and 50 enforced a three percent limit on the amount that property taxes could increase annually. The result was a greatly reduced appreciation of home values – and thus, property taxes – in the following years. In 1995, home values increased by roughly nine percent; by 1999, however, that number had dropped to less than two percent, reflecting a steady decline of ballooning prices in the housing market.[xxii]

In 1989, the Federal Title XI of the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery and Enforcement Act was enacted as a result of the savings and loan crisis of the 1980s. The federal law required states to establish a separate state agency to regulate appraisal activity. On April 2, 1991, Governor Barbara Roberts signed HB 2627, moving the responsibility of regulating and licensing appraisers from the Real Estate Agency to the Appraiser Certification and Licensure Board. Any existing appraisal licenses issued by the Real Estate Agency became invalid upon the bill's enactment. Real estate brokers could no longer conduct appraisal activity under their license; they had to obtain an appraisal license issued by the new board.

Commissioner Larsen was installed as President of the National Association of Real Estate License and Law Officials in October 1992.

1990s

Scott Taylor
1995 - 2006

In 1994, the Real Estate Agency moved from the Department of Commerce building to its current location at 1177 Center Street NE in Salem.

Commissioner Larsen retired April 30, 1995. Deputy Commissioner Gene Osborn served as Acting Commissioner until a new Commissioner was selected by the Governor. He had previously served twice in this capacity.

Effective August 14, 1995, Scott W. Taylor was appointed as Real Estate Agency Commissioner by Governor John Kitzhaber.

Effective July 1, 1996, the law changed requiring all licensees renewing to meet the new minimum requirement of 30 hours of continuing education (increased from 24 hours). Of the 30 hours, 15 hours had to be taken in required course topics established in rule.

In 1998, the Real Estate Agency appointed an advisory committee, which was representative of the industry and the geographical diversity of the State, to make recommendations on changing Oregon law to the "single licensing concept" adopted by Colorado in 1996.

2000s

The new millennium began in tragedy for the United States. The September 11 terrorist attacks in 2001 led President George W. Bush to declare a "War on Terror" against the Islamic militant group al-Qaeda, based in Afghanistan.

Almost one month following the attacks, on October 7, 2001, the United States invaded Afghanistan in an effort to remove al-Qaeda's influence, sparking years of controversy and debate back home over the United States' place in foreign affairs. These protests were compounded when the U.S. invaded Iraq on March 20, 2003, under allegations that Iraqi government possessed nuclear and chemical weapons and harbored al-Qaeda militants. The United States' involvement in the Middle-East was highly criticized even after Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's capture, trial, and execution by Iraq's interim government.

The economy in the 2000s was stable and gradually recovering from the dot-com bubble collapse of the 1990s. Even after the collapse, the Internet flourished as broadband internet replaced dial-up as the new standard, a service made affordable as companies discovered ways to tie advertising revenue to maintaining websites.

But the Internet was just as much about consumer empowerment as it was connectivity. Popular search engines such as Google made information more accessible than ever before by cutting the inconvenience of research. For homeowners especially, these services made daunting tasks like relocating across the country not only easier and less uncertain, but they allowed buyers to make informed decisions by themselves.

Everything changed in 2007. Reagan-era economic policy started a process of deregulation that gave banks more freedom to pursue their economic interests, culminating in the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act in 1999 that allowed commercial and investment banks to merge. At the turn of the century, historically low mortgage rates created a moment of opportunity for investors to seize the housing market. Lenders offered more and more sub-prime mortgages to high-risk borrowers, resulting in home prices skyrocketing.

When mortgage rates rose to 5.25 percent in 2006, prices dove and investments festered. By 2007, the housing bubble had collapsed. Many people became saddled with mortgages with adjustable rate or balloon mortgages on homes that were worth less than what was owed. Not able to afford the higher payments, and not able to sell the homes for enough to cover the mortgage, many homeowners were faced with foreclosure.

Because it was intricately woven through a network of economic functions, the housing market's failure plunged the U.S. into what was widely regarded as the "Great Recession."

Though countless factors contributed to the collapse of a market heavy in speculation, it was ultimately left to the government to repair the damage, much as it had done during the Great Depression.

Barack Obama made U.S. history in 2008 as the first African American president. He entered office facing a deadlocked Congress and depressed economy.

2000s

Gene Bentley
2007 - Present

During the 2001 Legislative Session, the first substantial change to Oregon Real Estate License Law since 1977 was made by passage of SB 446. After an initial attempt in 1998, the concept of "single licensing" was revisited, and the law requiring changes to licensing took effect on July 1, 2002. The law eliminated the license category of salesperson, creating two broker license categories: broker (entry level and supervised by a principal broker for three years), and principal broker (the only license type allowed to hire and supervise). A transition period was put into place allowing licensees time to complete transition courses to meet the new requirements of licensing. In anticipation of the effective date of the bill, May and June of 2002 saw record numbers of applicants taking license examinations. The Real Estate Agency printed 18,000 new licenses, reflecting the anticipated change to single licensing.

In November, 2006, Commissioner Scott Taylor resigned to return to the private sector. Katie Cannon, Deputy Commissioner, was appointed to serve as Acting Commissioner while awaiting an appointment of a new Commissioner by the Governor.

Governor Ted Kulongoski appointed Gene Bentley as Real Estate Agency Commissioner effective May 6, 2007.

2010 - Present

The economy stabilized in the late 2000s, but the political turmoil and deadlock continued into the 2010s. Though President Barack Obama entered office on a campaign of change, much of his reforms were generally opposed by Republicans in Congress.

Despite an intense battle, the Affordable Care Act, a health care reform law and arguably President Obama's landmark achievement, passed through a largely Democratic Congress and was signed into law on March 23, 2010.[xxiii] Attempts to repeal the law before 2014, when major parts of the law take effect, are ongoing.

After several key losses for Republicans, the political climate shifted. In a 2010 special election to fill a vacant seat left by the death of Senator Edward "Ted" Kennedy, Scott Brown became the first Republican senator from Massachusetts – a historically Democratic state – in almost 40 years.[xxiv]

Riding on Senator Brown's success, the Tea Party, a movement of conservative Republicans that promised to control the government's overspending, dominated the 2010 midterm elections and secured a Republican majority in the House of Representatives.[xxv]

Partisan lines were drawn in the sand and both chambers of Congress were divided. The 112th Congress (2011-2012) passed only 230 bills.[XXVI] The 113th Congress (2013-2014) appears to be continuing that trend by passing only 58 bills in 2013.[xxvii]

John Kitzhaber, who served two terms as Oregon's governor from 1995 to 2002, was re-elected for a record third term in 2010.

In 2012, President Obama won re-election. Congressional Democrats won the 2012 elections with a net gain in seats, but keeping the tense balance of power between the House[xxviii] and Senate.[xxix]

Many other nations experienced a historical level of political and social activism at the turn of the decade. Revolutions began around the world in protest of government corruption, economic instability, poverty, and dictatorships. The largest and most consequential of these movements, the Arab Spring, resulted in the overthrow of several Middle Eastern governments. Conflicts continue to this day – sometimes violently, as is the ongoing Syrian Civil War.

The 2010s also saw the end of U.S. military efforts overseas. On May 1, 2011, a raid on al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden's Pakistani residence by U.S. Special Forces left bin Laden dead.[xxx] Later that year, the United States officially declared its war in Iraq over on December 18, when the last troops withdrew.[xxxi]

After the housing bubble burst in 2007, the U.S. economy started to emerge from its recession in 2009.[xxxii] Real estate prices dropped on average by 30 percent during the economic downturn and, from 2010 onward, climbed slower than pre-collapse rates, offering buyers a safe opportunity to purchase homes at affordable prices if they could meet the stricter financing requirements.[xxxiii]

Despite the improving economy, specters of the housing crisis still loom. The fallout from the foreclosure crisis that started in 2010 is still being felt in the United States in 2013.

2010

To The Present

Evidence shows that several large banks failed to follow appropriate foreclosure procedures. There were claims that bank employees forged signatures and fabricated documents to speed up the foreclosure process.[xxxiv] A new federal agency, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau was created to supervise bank compliance with consumer financial laws.[xxxv] In September 2013, the CFPB reported that banks continued to have issues with basic mortgage payment processing.[xxxvi]

In the years leading up to 2010, the overall number of real estate licensees in Oregon decreased. The resulting reduction in funding required the Oregon Real Estate Agency to look for ways to save both natural and financial resources. The *Oregon Real Estate News-Journal* went completely electronic in 2010. eLicense, an online licensing system that allows licensees to do business with the Agency in a more efficient manner, went live in 2012. And the Agency changed its preferred method of communication to electronic mail. With these changes, the Agency was able to keep stable service levels without raising licensing fees.

The first part of the 2010s saw changes to the educational and licensing requirements for real estate licensees. Starting in 2011, licensees were required to take continuing education from Agency-certified providers and became responsible for maintaining their own continuing education records. A license examination became part the principal broker license requirements in 2011. The Agency also reviewed and revamped pre-license education course content guidelines. Pre-license schools were required to offer courses based on the new guidelines starting 2013. Additionally, due to a law change, the Property Manager Advanced Practices course became a requirement for new property manager licensees in 2013. It is believed that these changes have "raised the bar" for Oregon's real estate licensees both now and in the future.

Licensee Counts

Year	Count	Year	Count
1919	1,537	1967	8,235
1920	2,406	1968	8,728
1921	2,506	1969	9,655
1922	2,438	1970	8,605
1923	2,280	1971	10,190
1924	2,320	1972	11,385
1925	2,684	1973	12,058
1926	2,900	1974	11,346
1927	3,037	1975	12,032
1928	2,870	1976	13,435
1929	2,611	1977	15,995
1930	2,272	1978	19,168
1931	1,984	1979	21,371
1932	1,797	1980	20,934
1933	1,436	1981	20,816
1934	1,244	1982	17,582
1935	1,410	1983	16,255
1936	1,713	1984	14,906
1937	2,097	1985	14,509
1938	1,995	1986	14,664
1939	2,059	1987	14,348
1940	1,612	1988	14,483
1941	1,929	1990	16,853
1942	1,898	1991	17,548
1943	2,003	1992	18,094
1944	2,450	1993	18,941
1945	2,972	1994	19,528
1946-1947	5,348	1989	15,427
1948	5,516	1995	19,654
1949	5,649	1996	19,588
1950	5,638	1997	18,773
1951	6,576	1998	17,836
1952	6,914	1999	17,273
1953	7,125	2000	16,543
1954	7,295	2001	19,216
1955	7,500	2002	19,495
1956	6,364	2003	19,498
1957	6,388	2004	20,670
1958	6,045	2005	21,787
1959	6,552	2006	21,168
1960	7,310	2007	24,444
1961	7,532	2008	23,602
1962	7,807	2009	22,135
1963	7,618	2010	20,964
1964	8,316	2011	19,532
1965	8,630	2012	18,052
1966	8,350	2013	18,505

Real Estate Commissioners

Term	Name
1919-1920	C.V. JOHNSON
1921	A.C. BARBER
1922-1926	WILL MOORE
1927-1930	CLARE A. LEE
1931-1934	A.H. AVERILL
1935-1938	HUGH H. EARLE
1939-1949	CLAUDE H. MURPHY
1950-1953	AL J. CROSE
1954-1956	RAGNOR O. JOHNSON
1957-1959	CLARENCE F. HYDE
1960-1966	ROBERT J. JENSEN
1967-1971	JOHN E. BLACK
1972	FRED H. LAYMAN
1973-1974	M.J. HOLBROOK
1975-1978	GORDON W. BURBEE
1979-1982	WILLIAM F. GWINN
1983-1994	MORELLA R. LARSEN
1995-2006	SCOTT W. TAYLOR
2007-2014	GENE BENTLEY

Real Estate Board:

Names of Real Estate Board members are in alphabetical order, followed by their term(s) of service.

SHARON KAY ACUFF 1978-1980
HERBERT ALSTADT 1956-1967
DORIS E. ANDERSEN 1992-1997
KEITH BATES 1966-1969
RON BENTZ 1981-1984
ROBERT BILLS 1974-1977
JOHN E. BLACK 1967-1971
GORDON BRUNTON 1960-1972
ALFRED BULLIER, JR 1968-1972
GORDON W. BURBEE 1975-1978
E.E. BURDICK 1945-1955
CARLOS CABRERA 1998-2001
E.M. CHILCOTE 1942-1957
TROY COSTALES 2000-2008
AL J. CROSE 1950-1953
C.C. CUNNINGHAM 1971-1974
E.R. CURFMAN 1957-1960
ROBERT DAVIES 1979-1984
WARREN (LEE) DUNN 2007-2014
MARCIA EDWARDS 2010-2014
ANN ELGIN 1995-2002
DIANA EMAMI 2011-2014
JAMES FARLEY 1975-1978
JAMES (JEF) FARLEY 2012-2014
WILLIAM FROHNMAYER 1958-1965
COBURN L. GRABENHORST, SR 1973-1976
MICHAEL GRAEPER 2001-2009
WILLIAM F. GWINN 1979-1981
YVONNE F. HACHIYA 1988-1991
JOANN HANSEN 2010-2014
JUDITH H. HELTZEL 1979-1982
BYRON HENDRICKS 2007-2014
CHRIS HERMANSKI 2007-2014
DON HERRIED 1970-1973
M.J. HOLBROOK 1973-1974
NIKKI HOLLEN 1983-1984
HELLEN A.F. HOLLYER 1981-1985
RICHARD C. HORN 1956-1958
JACK O. HUDSON 1977-1980
JAMES (HAM) JACKSON 1985-1994
ROBERT J. JENSEN 1960-1966
RAGNOR O. JOHNSON 1953-1956
VICTOR Y. KEE 1994-2006
ART KEGLER 2003-2011
ROBERT LADU 1999-2006
MORELLA LARSEN 1978-1982
FRED H. LAYMAN 1972
ROBERT LEFEBER 2007-2014
KIMBERLY MEDFORD 2007-2010
CLAUDE H. MURPHY 1939-1949
LEE OHMART 1961-1968
DONALD R. PALMER 1990-1991
JAY A. PHILLIPS 1963-1970
JOYCE L. PLYMER 1994-2000
CONI RATHBONE 2012-2014
JOAN W. REESE 1983-1994
MAXINE RIBERA-CARD 1998-2006
C. WAYNE ROBBINS 1985-1993
WILL H. ROSS 1939-1955
VADA SALINAS 2004-2006
M.L. SCHMIDT 1954-1956, 1959-1962
W.B. SHIVERLY 1939-1944
JAMES SIBBALD 1995-2003
GEORGE SLAPE 2009-2011
HELEN STONE 1973-1974
DELORIS STROMME 1985-1989
CARL Y. TENGWALD 1939-1952
NANCY R TUOR 1975-1977
DAN J. VOLKMER 1992-1998
KATHRYN WARNER 1980-1987
FRED WENGER, III 1995-1999
JAMES L. WHITNEY 1986-1996
DONNA B. WILKERSON 1994-1997
LOWELL WILLIAMSON 1939-1941
O.M. WILSON 1975-1979
MARIANNE WOOD 2002-2009
GLORIA WRIGHT 1975-1978
RICHARD A. YOCOM 1981-1994
JOHN ZUPAN 1998-2006

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STATE OF OREGON
REAL ESTATE AGENCY