

*The Indiana Association of REALTORS® Presents...  
Fact or Fiction - Let's GET REAL about Township Assessors!*

Fiction	GET REAL! These are the <u>FACTS</u>
All township assessors work hard and “do a good job.”	While many township officials work hard, the objective evidence overwhelmingly says that the quality of their work does not meet State standards. REALTORS see evidence every day of tax assessments that bear no relation to a property’s market value. The Indiana Fiscal Policy Institute statewide study documented incorrect and inconsistent assessments in all but one county in the state. It’s no wonder, since achieving consistency across 1,008 jurisdictions with 1,008 different ideas of property valuation is impossible. <u>Simply stated, all objective evidence says that the overall quality of the township assessor’s work is not good enough. Are we willing to continue to accept “not good enough?”</u>
Elected township officials “know” the property in their township.	“Knowing” property and accurately determining its market value are two very different things. Understanding real estate markets requires education, training, and sophisticated technological and data capabilities. The State requires professional real estate appraisers to meet extensive education and applied experience requirements before granting a license to practice their profession. <u>There are no requirements of those who choose to place their name on the ballot to run for a township office.</u>
Assessing can’t be done cheaper any other way. Counties will have to hire township officials or others and they won’t save any money.	The “not saving money” excuse is a red herring. The REAL money at stake here is the \$6.2 billion of property taxes paid by the taxpayer. The REAL issue is the correct, equitable apportionment of those taxes. In fact, we should invest more in this system to bring it into the 21st Century. <u>The result: fewer taxpayers that pay more than their fair share of the tax burden, as we know happens with the current system.</u>
Property owners can “talk to an elected official” about their assessment.	Do most taxpayers really know their township assessor? By nearly a 2 to 1 margin, taxpayers support elimination of township assessors, according to a statewide REALTOR® survey. Other surveys have found that over 2/3 don’t even know their assessor’s name. Your property is supposed to be valued at its market value. Market value is an objective concept, determined by market forces, not by a negotiation. <u>Indeed, if your township assessor knows your neighbor, but not you, who will receive the lower assessment?</u>

**For more REAL information and analysis of Indiana’s broken Property Tax system and the REALTOR® Reform Agenda, visit [www.GETREALINDIANA.net](http://www.GETREALINDIANA.net)**

## Fact or Fiction – Let’s GET REAL about Township Assessors!

<b>Fiction</b>	<b>GET REAL! These are the <u>FACTS</u></b>
<p>If there is only one assessor in each county, what happens if they are “bad?” I’d rather see a county where there are 7 good township assessors and two bad ones. At least then most taxpayers are ok.</p>	<p>First, REALTORS do not accept the premise that it is more likely that a single county assessor will be “bad” than any township assessor would be “bad.” <u>With more professional state certification standards required of anyone who wants the assessing job, quality will improve.</u></p> <p>Second, even one “bad” township assessor affects every taxpayer in a county. When property is under assessed in one township, tax rates for all taxpayers will be higher and every taxpayer in that and every other township will pay more than their fair share. In fact, taxpayers in the township with the “bad” assessor will actually pay less than their fair share.</p>
<p>Elected Township officials represent taxpayer interests. Eliminating them will reduce our democracy.</p>	<p>Township officials administer state law and have no legal authority to do otherwise. By law, they carry out state law and perform functions set forth by state regulation. <u>They do not represent those who voted them into office.</u></p>
<p>Taxpayers really don’t care about their assessed value; all they care about is the tax rate.</p>	<p>Nothing could be further from the truth. For everyone to contribute equitably and “fairly” to the property tax burden, assessments have to be correct and consistently so. While no one likes paying high taxes, what matters more to most taxpayers is that everyone pays their “fair share.” That can only happen if everyone’s property is assessed correctly and consistently with regard to their neighbors. <u>You bet taxpayers care about their assessed value!</u></p>
<p>The State “changes the rules” so often that we can’t keep up with it.</p>	<p>The Indiana Supreme Court required market value assessment in 1999. Township officials have had almost 10 years since that time to become educated, trained, and proficient at market appraisal techniques. Yet inconsistencies in assessed values are still rampant, causing taxpayers to pay too much or too little, with no end in sight. After the fact attempts to correct problems resulting from bad assessments have been made. But these have not corrected bad assessments and have been to no avail. <u>The state is NOT the problem. Incorrect and inconsistent assessments made by townships who do not want to accept change are.</u></p>

