BOMA: Advocating Commercial Real Estate’s Business Case
The Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA) International is a federation of 93 BOMA U.S. associations, BOMA Canada and its 11 regional associations and 13 BOMA international affiliates. Founded in 1907, BOMA represents the owners and managers of all commercial property types, including nearly 10 billion square feet of U.S. office space that supports 3.7 million jobs and contributes $205 billion to the U.S. GDP. Its mission is to advance a vibrant commercial real estate industry through advocacy, influence and knowledge.

BOMA International is a primary source of information on building management and operations, development, leasing, building operating costs, energy consumption patterns, local and national building codes, legislation, occupancy statistics, technological developments and other industry trends.

MEMBERSHIP BY FUNCTION
(function by percentage)

MEMBERSHIP BY EDUCATION

69%

have a four-year degree or higher

MEMBERSHIP BY BUILDING SIZE

76%

manage office space over 100,000 square feet
INTRODUCTION

GOVERNMENT DISCORD AND LEADERSHIP BREAKDOWNS ONLY STRENGTHEN OUR NEED FOR POWERFUL FEDERAL OUTREACH.

2013 will not be a year that Congressional leaders, nor the White House, brag about in years to come. The ongoing sequestration, teetering on the brink of the fiscal cliff, a government shutdown and an utter breakdown in civility and compromise, ensured that no major policy decisions moved forward. Debates over the Affordable Care Act (aka “Obamacare”), signed into law in March of 2010, surfaced and resurfaced, and the filibuster rule changes ("nuclear option") that Democrats hope will ease the path for judicial nominations but Republicans view as a dangerous restructuring of Senate rules were just two examples of the level of discord.

That does not mean that no progress was made or that legislation did not move forward. It does mean that BOMA International’s advocacy staff has an even more pivotal role to educate, and educate some more, members of Congress and their staffs to ensure that, when something does break through the logjam, policymakers are well-versed on commercial real estate issues.

While economic indicators may show that the economy is recovering and the commercial real estate industry is back on course, BOMA International understands that, for many, it still doesn’t feel like we’ve completely turned the corner. Now is not the time for policymakers to turn their backs on our industry or balance the nation’s checkbook on the backs of real estate. Now, more than ever, we need to ensure that progress continues to move forward and that commercial real estate enhances its stature as a leading industry and job creator whose health is vital to the continued prosperity and well-being of the country.

INDUSTRY IMPACT

$60 BILLION
New personal earnings

$80 BILLION
Spent on building operating expenditures

$205 BILLION
Contribution to GDP
WHAT SHOULD WE EXPECT IN 2014?
As we move into 2014, don’t expect Congress to be much more prolific. In fact, as we move through primary season into the mid-term elections, the spotlight will be more on “looking good” and “winning” than on making good public policy decisions. Republicans feel that the negative early buzz on Obamacare will help them win enough seats to gain control of the Senate; Democrats feel that the Republicans took the majority of the public blame for the government shutdown and that will give them the needed votes to gain control of the House. In either case, there’s still many months of campaigning (and many months of potential mishaps) to realign public opinion. To further complicate election scenarios, redistricting carved out more “safe” seats—meaning the real competition will be in the primary elections, and not necessarily the general election (i.e., there’s plenty of potential for Democrats and Republicans alike to cannibalize themselves without the help of the other party).

The late December budget agreement passed by the House and Senate means we will be able to avoid another government shutdown, but Congress still must address the issue of raising the debt ceiling. Several critical commercial real estate issues are poised for action, including TRIA, tax reform and energy.

The following pages highlight some of BOMA’s “Tier 1” issues; more information on all of our issues, as well as our formal policy positions, can be found on the BOMA International website at www.boma.org. We encourage you to get involved! We are always looking for passionate volunteers to serve on the advocacy- and codes-related committees at BOMA International and within the local BOMA associations. A key to BOMA’s success on advocacy issues is our dedicated grassroots force!

BOMA HAS ISSUES

The issues highlighted in this report are just a few of the many issues we track and lobby. BOMA International has established policy positions, which can be found on the website (www.boma.org), on many more, including:

**ENERGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT**
- Energy-Efficient Commercial Buildings Tax Incentives
- Energy Use Data Acquisition
- Mandatory Benchmarking
- Lead in Paint
- Water Efficiency
- Storm Water Management

**TAX AND FINANCIAL ISSUES**
- Tax Reform
- Carried Interest
- Fire Sprinkler Tax Incentives
- Foreign Investment in Real Property Act (FIRPTA)
- Leasehold Depreciation
- Roof Tax Incentives

**OTHER LEGISLATIVE ISSUES**
- Immigration
- Labor Policies/Preserving a Democratic Workplace
- Catastrophe Insurance
- Terrorism Risk Insurance
- Metal Theft
- Building Security and Emergency Preparedness
- ADA Notice and Compliance

**CODES AND STANDARDS**
- Energy Efficiency and Green Building Codes
- Accessibility Codes and Standards
- Firefighter Air Replenishment Systems
- Luminous Egress Markings
- Sprinkler Retrofits
Camp (R-Mich.) released discussion drafts and established 11 working groups devoted to studying possible reforms of the current tax code. BOMA International submitted comments to the real estate working group in support of its priority issues, which include a permanent 15-year timeline for depreciation of leasehold improvements; tax incentives for replacing commercial roof systems or fire sprinklers; and legislation to extend and improve tax incentives for energy-efficiency retrofits to new and existing buildings. BOMA also urged caution when considering changes to partnership law as it relates to changing how the incentive of carried interest is taxed.

Believing that it’s possible that “stand-alone” tax bills on individual tax provisions could shift focus from the broader tax reform debate, Chairman Camp limited the introduction of tax legislation that members have traditionally introduced in years past. Consequently, legislation was not introduced in 2013 on several of BOMA International’s priority issues, including leasehold depreciation and tax incentives for replacement of commercial roof systems, fire sprinklers and energy-efficiency retrofits.

Although most of BOMA’s tax issues remain in limbo, legislation (H.R. 2870) to modify the Foreign Investment in Real Property Tax Act of 1980 (FIRPTA) has been introduced in the House by Reps. Kevin Brady (R-Texas) and Joe Crowley.
This would raise (from five to 10 percent) the amount that a foreign investor can invest in a REIT before being subject to FIRPTA, and exempt liquidating distributions from domestically controlled REITs from FIRPTA tax (by reversing IRS Ruling 2007-55).

Meanwhile in the Senate, tax reform efforts by the retiring Chairman of the Senate Committee on Finance Max Baucus (D-Mont.) began with viewing options papers; collecting feedback from various stakeholders; and holding weekly, bipartisan meetings with committee members. As the year progressed, Chairman Baucus and Ranking Member Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) announced a “blank slate” approach, which invited all senators to provide written comments on specific tax policy reforms. Though the Committee promised comments submitted would be kept private, many shied away at the possibility that their comments may one day be made public and used against them politically. Therefore, few senators provided written feedback, and those that did, commented in broad, general terms. As a part of the blank slate exercise, BOMA International, along with 20 other real estate organizations, collectively submitted comments to Sens. Baucus and Hatch, expressing principles for a tax code that promotes economic growth as it pertains to both the commercial and residential real estate community. In November 2013, Chairman Baucus released discussion drafts; these have been a very mixed bag for real estate, and BOMA and our CRE coalition partners will continue to weigh in.

As for the introduction of tax legislation, the same limitations imposed in the House were not in place in the Senate. Thus, a bill to make permanent the 15-year depreciation schedule for leasehold improvements, restaurant improvements and new construction and retail improvements (S. 749) was introduced by Sens. Bob Casey (D-Pa.) and John Cornyn (R-Texas). BOMA International continues to lead efforts in building the list of co-sponsors on this piece of legislation with its partners in the Depreciation Fairness Coalition. In addition, a bill to incentivize fire sprinkler retrofits (S. 1163) was introduced by Sens. Tom Carper (D-Del.) and Susan Collins (R-Maine), and companion legislation (S. 1181) to the House FIRPTA bill was introduced by Sens. Bob Menendez (D-N.J.) and Mike Enzi (R-Wyo.).

With the groundwork for tax reform in place, both Camp and Baucus had publicly stated that a mark-up of tax legislation was possible before the end of 2013. However, politics intervened in September, as Republicans began to attack “Obamacare.” Facilitated primarily by Tea Party Republicans in both chambers, House leadership refused to pass a continuing resolution to fund the government for fiscal year 2014 unless President Obama and Senate Democrats agreed to significant changes to Obamacare. What resulted was a two-week government shutdown starting on October 1, the same day the new healthcare law’s exchanges were open to enrollment. During this time, the debate morphed from a battle over Obamacare, to one over raising the debt ceiling (where the deadline was also fast approaching). Ultimately, the House and Senate voted in favor of a bill that established a Senate-House budget conference tasked with negotiating broader fiscal reforms by Dec. 13, 2013, along with government funding until Jan. 15, 2014, and an increase of the debt ceiling until Feb. 7, 2014.

In the end, the government shutdown cost Congress time that might otherwise have been used to take further steps towards tax reform, and provided yet another example of just how divided Washington has become. The pervasive skepticism already in place over the immediate future of tax reform has grown, with Congress unable to pass even basic legislation to fund the government. Tax reform’s future in 2014 is anything but certain.

**DID YOU KNOW?...**

- For each $1 spent on office building expenditures, the U.S. economy gained $2.57, resulting in $79.7 billion in annual operating expenses and contributing to a total of $205 billion to GDP.

- For each $1 of office building expenditures, workers in the United States realized an increase of 76 cents in personal earnings.

- For each $1 million of expenditures for office building operations, 19.6 jobs were supported nationwide, resulting in a total of 3.7 million jobs across all sectors—in addition to the more than two million jobs directly supported by office building operations.
**LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES**

Since the climate on Capitol Hill hasn’t left any room for cooperation, even on popular bipartisan issues, it’s no surprise that energy-efficiency legislation has had slow and unsteady progress. Before the October 2013 government shutdown, it looked like energy-efficiency legislation introduced by Sens. Jeanne Shaheen (D-N.H.) and Rob Portman (R-Ohio), known as the Energy Savings and Industrial Competitiveness Act of 2013 (S. 761), had sufficient support to pass the Senate. However, almost immediately after the Senate debate began, a controversial amendment was offered on a non-germane topic (Obamacare), and the bill was held up because of procedural hurdles that call for action on the amendments as they’re introduced.

The bill was eventually pulled off the floor to prevent a vote on limiting funding and implementation of the Affordable Care Act. In the meantime, Senate leaders have been unable to work out a deal to limit amendments (of which there are more than 100 and counting), and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) won’t proceed without one.

While BOMA International is neutral on S. 761, we are actively engaged in trying to get it, and its House companion bill (H.R. 1616, introduced by Reps. David McKinley [R-W.V.] and Peter Welch [D-Vt.]) to the floor for a full debate. Sens. Portman and Shaheen crafted the bill after getting significant input from the commercial real estate industry and made substantial compromises to BOMA and our coalition partners. Potential amendments that we are supporting could improve upon some of our remaining concerns and prove to be very constructive for our industry. Specifically, we are encouraging amendments that would further clarify the role of the Department of Energy in the building code development process and a new “Tenant Star” program that would provide tools, resources and incentives to building occupants to improve their space, among others. Stand-alone Tenant Star legislation has also been introduced—in the Senate by Sens. Michael Bennet (D-Colo.) and Kelly Ayotte (R-N.H.) as S.1392, and in the House by Reps. Welch and McKinley as H.R. 2126.

BOMA International has also been aggressively advocating for an extension and improvement of tax

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**ENERGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

In 2013, BOMA was recognized for a sixth time with an ENERGY STAR® Partner of the Year- Sustained Excellence Award.
incentives for energy-efficiency retrofits to new and existing buildings. Current 179D deductions are set to expire at the end of 2013. The current law provides for an accelerated deduction of up to $1.80 per square foot for energy-efficient upgrades that achieve a 50 percent reduction in annual energy cost to the user, compared to a base building defined by the ASHRAE/IESNA 90.1-2001 Standard. However, BOMA International would like to see this deduction improved, not merely extended. While better than nothing, the current 179D deduction does not provide sufficient incentive to meet such aggressive hurdles in the existing building community. The draft legislation would increase the maximum deduction to $4 per square foot for existing building retrofits. It utilizes a sliding scale that allows greater deduction amounts as correlated to higher levels of energy savings and performance, and the energy savings is calculated based on the building’s own pre-retrofit baseline. The draft legislation would also extend the deduction for an additional three years, through the end of 2016, and implement a “REIT fix” to allow REITs and LLPs with limited or no federal tax liability to take advantage of the incentive. Unfortunately, this is one of the many tax bills that hasn’t seen any action because of pending tax reform effort. We expect to see action on this issue once tax reform either starts to move or is officially declared dead.

At the state and local level, one of the energy issues that continues to spread quickly is mandatory energy benchmarking and disclosure requirements for commercial buildings. BOMA remains unmoved in its position that, while we encourage our members to benchmark with the ENERGY STAR® Portfolio Manager tool, it must remain voluntary. BOMA also advocates for utilities to provide whole-building aggregate data upon request. Without that data, multi-tenant buildings with separately metered tenants are often unable to benchmark, and an accurate picture of a building’s performance cannot be assessed.

IN THE AGENCIES
Meanwhile, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) continues to be under fire, especially from House Republicans, on a variety of different issues and for a variety of different reasons. This enhanced scrutiny has, in part, led to a much slower pace issuing new regulations, as EPA needs to ensure that it has completed all the regulatory procedures and hurdles before moving forward with controversial rule-makings. Two of our top priority issues have now been delayed several times (and that’s a good thing!). The long-anticipated, EPA-proposed regulation on post-construction storm water runoff is now expected by the end of the first quarter in 2014, though that date may slide. Similarly, EPA’s lead renovation, repair and painting rule has also seen several delays. BOMA International testified at a hearing in June 2013 on this issue. Proposed
regulations are expected no later than July 1, 2015, with final action by Dec. 31, 2016. BOMA will continue to work with an alliance of industry partners and legal counsel to monitor and respond to both of these issues.

**PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS HELP MOVE MARKETS**

Four years ago, BOMA International was one of the founding members of the Better Buildings Alliance (originally called the Commercial Real Estate Energy Alliance—CREEA). BOMA, the Department of Energy (DOE) and a small number of the prominent national commercial real estate companies that were leading the charge on sustainability came together to see if, collectively, we could identify the “game changers” that would transform the energy marketplace—and the commercial real estate industry.

Now, the Better Buildings Alliance (BBA) is more than 200 members strong, representing more than 10 billion square feet of commercial real estate in seven key market sectors: commercial real estate, healthcare, hospitality, retail, food service, public and higher education. BBA members commit to addressing energy-efficiency needs in their buildings by setting

**IN YOUR DEFENSE**

BOMA’s Industry Defense Fund (IDF) ensures that BOMA local associations, state coalitions and BOMA International have the means to fight critical attacks on our industry. Here’s a look at just a few of the issues the IDF has helped support:

**KOONTZ VS. ST. JOHN’S RIVER WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT**
The IDF enabled BOMA to join an amicus brief on behalf of a Florida property owner in a land-use case. In June 2013, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in our favor in a big legal victory for private property rights.

**Mandatory Benchmarking and Disclosure Research**
The IDF helped BOMA/Boston fund a white paper to assess the effectiveness of building energy-efficiency labeling policies and identify the trade-offs posed by these policies.

**WELLS FARGO NA VS. CHERRYLAND MALL LIMITED PARTNERSHIP AND DAVID W. SCHOSTAK**
The IDF stepped in to help BOMA/Metro Detroit and BOMA Michigan defend the “non-recourse” intent of CMBS loans.

**Campaign to Defeat California Assembly Bill 350**
The IDF helped BOMA California fund a communications strategy against legislation (AB350) that would have dictated hiring decisions for building service employees.

**FEMA Floodplain Rule-Making**
IDF funding assisted local associations in the state of Washington to challenge the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) authority to alter its rule-making with respect to overly restrictive floodplain regulations.

**SAY “NO” TO AMENDMENT 4**
The IDF aided BOMA Florida’s successful effort to defeat a ballot initiative that would have required voters to approve all local comprehensive land-use plan changes.
energy-savings goals; developing innovative, energy-efficiency resources; and adopting advanced, cost-effective technologies and market practices. Members agree to participate in at least one BBA activity each year and share their successes with their peers, while the DOE commits to connect members with technical resources and provide a platform for peer exchange. The types of activities members can participate in include testing out an implementation model, joining a technology adoption campaign or participating in a technology challenge or demonstration.

Since 2009, the program has become closely aligned with President Obama’s Better Buildings Initiative and Better Buildings Challenge, and supports the target goal of 20 percent energy savings by 2020.

BOMA formed other partnerships and collaborations of note. In fall 2012, BOMA International, the International Facility Management Association and the Green Parking Council joined forces with DOE and the Better Buildings Alliance to launch the Lighting Energy Efficiency in Parking (LEEP) Campaign, a program offering guidance and recognition to facility owners interested in implementing energy-efficient lighting solutions in their parking facilities. The goal of the campaign is to retrofit more than 100 million square feet of parking lot/garage space. To date, we have exceeded the goal and are still going strong. For more information, go to www.leepcampaign.org.

On May 30, 2013, DOE and BBA launched a campaign, in conjunction with ASHRAE and the Retail Industry Leaders Association (RILA), to promote energy-efficient rooftop unit (RTU) air-conditioning systems for commercial and industrial buildings, schools and retail structures. The Advanced RTU Campaign (ARC) encourages building owners and managers whose buildings use rooftop air-conditioning units—often buildings that are four stories or under—to change out older units with units that are about 60 percent more efficient than those from 10 years ago, or retrofit their existing units with controls that can reduce energy usage by 40 percent. ARC estimates that, if all 10- to 20-ton commercial units were changed out with today’s most efficient units, business would save $1 billion each year in energy costs. BOMA International is a supporter of this program, and we are assisting DOE and RILA to communicate with BOMA members. More information about ARC is available at www.advancedrtu.org.

With so much media focus on feuding bureaucrats and wasteful government spending, it’s great to also see examples of government programs that work. The Better Buildings Alliance is a public-private partnership that harnesses the vast research capabilities of the DOE and the national labs, the experience of real estate-sector participants and the outreach of associations like BOMA to ensure that new and innovative technologies are being thoroughly tested and deployed. Go to www4.eere.energy.gov/alliance for more information on the Better Buildings Alliance.
Another BOMA priority for 2014 is the reauthorization of the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act (TRIA). Without Congressional action, the current program will expire at the end of 2014.

The federal government’s terrorism risk insurance program was first put into place during the immediate aftermath of 9/11, when many building owners were advised that their policies would not be renewed or that their new policies would exclude terror/war risks. We are now 12 years into the government program, which was initially intended to be a short-term backstop, and it still appears that the insurance and reinsurance industry cannot accurately underwrite and assume the risk (and, may not ever). To ensure business continuity, protect taxpayers and policyholders and provide a mechanism for the orderly pay out of claims in the event of a terrorist attack, the terrorism risk insurance program must be renewed.

Since TRIA was initially passed in 2002, it has been extended and revised in 2005 and 2007. In 2013, Congress began looking at the issue. Three extension bills have been introduced in the House of Representatives, and both the House Financial Services Committee and the Senate Finance Committee have begun the hearing process. The buzz on Capitol Hill is that TRIA will be extended. BOMA and our coalition partners in the Coalition to Insure Against Terrorism (CIAT) are working tirelessly to educate Congress on the need to immediately extend the legislation and not wait until the Dec. 31, 2014, expiration (or, worse, after it’s expired).

Until Congress acts on this issue, don’t be surprised if you receive notice from your insurers that the terrorism risk portion of your coverage will lapse on Jan. 1, 2015.

TRIA: HOW DOES IT WORK?

INSURER RESPONSIBILITY: If a terrorist attack occurs, resulting in at least $100 million in aggregate losses, the insurer will pay claims up to 20 percent of the insurer’s direct earned prior year premium and 15 percent of claims above its deductible. As much as $35.5 billion in insured losses may be retained by insurers, even before the federal government steps in to help.

POLICYHOLDERS: Commercial policyholders pay the premium for terrorism coverage and retain any individual policy deductibles, as applicable. If there are any federal payments, commercial policyholders will be responsible for repaying such assistance through a policy surcharge, up to certain mandatory amounts. Policyholders are also on the hook for aggregate losses exceeding $100 billion.

FEDERAL ROLE: The federal government will only step in if the act of terrorism results in at least $100 million in aggregate insured losses. Federal assistance is provided only if an insurer has paid out losses exceeding the deductible and will cover only 85 percent over the deductible. There is a 15 percent co-share of losses exceeding insurer deductibles.

TAXPAYER PROTECTION: For terrorist events that result in aggregate losses up to $27.5 billion, any federal assistance through TRIA must be recouped over time through a surcharge on all commercial policies in covered lines.
BOMA continues to be a major force as the only national commercial real estate trade organization with an aggressive codes and standards advocacy program. We’re involved in codes and standards development from the moment they’re conceived—NOT after they’re released. We’re helping create—not reacting too late.

In 2013, BOMA’s team was, once again, the front line of defense in efforts to preserve safe, achievable and cost-effective codes and standards against the growing influence of powerful groups lobbying for major and costly shifts in U.S. building regulations. BOMA’s representation has been instrumental in helping save the commercial real estate industry billions of dollars.

BOMA chooses to be an active player in the development of model codes because proposed changes processed each year by the International Code Council (ICC) and other codes and standards organizations are truly pocketbook issues directly impacting you and your tenants. During the 2013 ICC code development cycle, BOMA was successful in getting more cost-effective design options, defeating unnecessary new construction requirements and eliminating onerous and costly existing buildings mandates. Mandatory mold inspections and remediation, radon abatement system retrofits, additional fire and energy system inspections and elevator emergency recall retrofits are just some of the proposals disapproved as a result of BOMA’s efforts. These results account for construction cost savings of more than $250,000 for each existing building, with an additional $30,000 saved in annual fees and operations and maintenance costs. In addition, BOMA’s efforts to defeat mandatory retroactive sprinkler system retrofits and compliance with current accessibility and fire code requirements in all existing buildings mean BOMA members will be spared costs associated with these defeated requirements.

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<th>DOLLARS SAVED</th>
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<td><strong>During the 2013 ICC code development cycle alone, BOMA’s representation was instrumental in helping save the commercial real estate industry:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>$2.50 per square foot for each existing U.S. building</strong></td>
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<td><strong>$30,000 per building in annual fees and O&amp;M costs</strong></td>
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<td><strong>$1 million to $4 million per existing building</strong> for installation costs associated with these defeated requirements</td>
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hearings. BOMA estimates that as many as 15,000 additional ICC members could participate in balloting on an average of more than 2,000 annual code change proposals.

This also presents a challenge and an opportunity for the commercial real estate industry to enhance its influence in the code development process through outreach to local and state building, fire and other code officials. These outreach efforts will be critical to ensuring our continued success, and, therefore, it is imperative that real estate professionals become more actively involved in conversations about future code proposals of concern to our industry. BOMA International will be working side by side with our nationwide network of local associations to ensure that building, fire and other code officials know BOMA and understand commercial real estate concerns for balanced, fair and cost-effective codes.

LOCAL LEGISLATIVE VICTORIES

DID YOU KNOW...

BOMA California

BOMA California successfully lobbied against a bill in the State Assembly that would have established a de facto split roll property tax, creating unequal tax treatment of business and residential property.

BOMA/Chicago

BOMA/Chicago successfully fought and lobbied to preserve the right of all commercial building owners to prohibit concealed weapons on their premises with proper posting and noticing.

BOMA/Denver Metro

BOMA/Denver Metro successfully avoided legislation limiting building owners’ abilities to navigate and proceed with property tax challenges.

BOMA Missouri

BOMA Missouri successfully supported legislation preserving historic tax credits, one of the most powerful and equitable economic development tools available to both residential and commercial property owners in both rural and urban areas, with a provision containing no decrease in the caps for these historic tax credits.

BOMA/Nebraska

BOMA/Nebraska successfully supported legislation authorizing partial abatements of property taxes for all businesses that renovate their buildings using the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) Existing Buildings: Operations & Maintenance rating system.

BOMA Ohio

BOMA Ohio successfully lobbied against a proposal in the Governor’s budget that would have imposed five percent sales tax on services, which would have had a detrimental effect on three services that are vital to members: commercial rent, real estate management fees and parking fees.

BOMA/Nevada

BOMA/Nevada successfully supported legislation authorizing partial abatements of property taxes for all businesses that renovate their buildings using the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) Existing Buildings: Operations & Maintenance rating system.

BOMA/Otah

BOMA/Utah successfully supported legislation that increases the property tax exemption on personal property for businesses from $3,500 to $10,000.
BOMA International continues to be an active participant in the area of building security and emergency preparedness throughout the country, whether it’s coordinating with federal, state and local authorities or coming together with like-minded industry organizations to develop resources that enable buildings to be informed when an event takes place. BOMA takes the issue of securing much of the nation’s critical infrastructure seriously.

Throughout its history, building security and emergency preparedness have always been a top concern to BOMA International members. The investment by the industry and BOMA continues with the bolstering of the Real Estate Information Sharing & Analysis Center (RE-ISAC). Established in 2003, the RE-ISAC is a public-private partnership between the U.S. real estate industry and federal Homeland Security officials. It serves as the primary conduit of terrorism and natural hazard warning and response information between the government and the commercial real estate industry. BOMA International contributes considerable resources to this not-for-profit, information-sharing entity to provide its members the most accurate and timely information possible should a threat materialize.

BOMA International’s coordination with authorities doesn’t stop there. BOMA continues to work with officials within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Federal Emergency Management Agency and the American Red Cross, whether it’s gleaning expertise on issues from the federal government or providing our own input on programs agencies are considering that impact the commercial real estate industry. In addition, in 2012, BOMA International entered into a partnership with DHS in its “If You See Something™” public awareness campaign. This simple and effective program raises public awareness of indicators of terrorism and terrorism-related crime, and emphasizes the importance of reporting suspicious activity to the proper local law enforcement authorities.

Through its Emergency Preparedness Committee, BOMA International brings together the industry to address preparedness topics via nationwide audio conferences, seminars and workshops. Members gain valuable insight into best practices and effective communication strategies with federal, state and local law enforcement. Now, more than ever, communications are being coordinated far better among building management, law enforcement, governmental agencies and tenants to ensure a quick response to possible threats. Building evacuation drills continue to be practiced throughout the country so that building owners and managers, as well as tenants, know what to do in case of emergency.

BOMA International continues to urge members to develop comprehensive emergency preparedness plans for each building they own or manage, and these comprehensive plans should be updated on a regular basis to reflect changing perils and threats. BOMA also urges our members to work with government entities to participate in the development of an overall coordinated plan. Throughout our history, BOMA members have kept building security and emergency preparedness a top priority. Most recently, BOMA published the latest version of its guidebook, Emergency Preparedness Guidebook: The Property Professional’s Resource for Developing Emergency Plans for Natural and Human-Based Threats, the industry’s definitive guide to emergency management.
The issues covered here are just a few of the issues that BOMA International’s Advocacy, Codes and Standards team and our committed network of volunteers advocate throughout the year. We encourage you to visit our website (www.boma.org) and subscribe to eNews to stay on top of advocacy issues and be ready to lend a hand as opportunities arise. Also, consider joining the BOMA crowd at the next National Issues Conference (either in D.C. or a “Local Edition” in your city), or at a state or local Advocacy Day. Together, we can make an impact!

GET INVOLVED!
BOMA International’s Advocacy, Codes and Standards staff is continuously looking for tools to help us do our jobs more effectively and to help members exercise their political voice. Here’s just a sample—all of these and more can be found at www.boma.org. Check these out. Join a committee. Give us a call. Give your policymakers a call!

BOMAPAC
BOMA International’s political action committee raises funds (personal contributions from BOMA members) to help support the re-election efforts of members of Congress (U.S. House and Senate) that support the commercial real estate industry. Your support of the PAC allows BOMA’s advocacy staff access to key policymakers and the opportunity to educate legislators on today’s critical issues.

Legislative Action Center
Write a letter to your federal or state legislators, make your voice heard to your local media or make a contribution to BOMAPAC through the Legislative Action Center.

State Legislation Action Center
Find out what’s happening in your state on CRE issues.

The Codes Toolkit
This online resource helps BOMA local associations and members understand the code development process—from the development of the model code to the adoption of codes at the state/local level. The toolkit also includes resources to help members advocate for or against specific proposed code changes, which will be even more important as the ICC continues its effort to change the voting protocol to allow for remote voting by code officials.

BOMA’s Economic Impact Study
“Where America Goes to Work: The Contribution of Office Building Operations to the Economy” study details the contributions of the office building industry to the local and national economy. This helps us articulate to policymakers—at all levels of government—how the industry supports job creation and a stronger overall economy. The new 2014 study should be available in May 2014.

WHAT KEEPS YOU AWAKE AT NIGHT?
BOMA’s National Advisory Council members—senior executives of large national commercial real estate firms—were asked, “What are today’s most pressing issues?”

- Uncertainty on the direction of our nation’s tax and regulatory policies.
- Fee compression. How can we keep doing more with less?
- Shifting tenant space needs: lost revenue and growing IAQ/ventilation concerns.
- Keeping up with technology to support growing services.
- Ensuring third-party providers are performing to expectations.
- Maintaining healthy profit margins.
- Winning business in a competitive marketplace.
- Diversity.
- Teaching staff to communicate better.
- New approaches to business.