

Home Buyer Advocates Oppose Anti-consumer Private Listing Networks

During National Consumer Protection Week, Buyers Brokers Only advocates for transparency in real estate and opposes harmful private listing networks.

BOSTON, MA, UNITED STATES, March 5, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Buyers Brokers Only, an exclusive buyer agent real estate firm serving Greater Boston, is raising concerns over some in the real estate industry who are pushing for the use of private listing networks, where homes for sale are only accessible to select groups of agents.

Private listings, sometimes called "pocket listings" or "off-market listings," limit access to homes for sale and disadvantage home buyers. These networks reduce visibility, create barriers for buyers, and ultimately drive up costs.

Transparency and equitable access to real estate listings are fundamental to a fair housing market.

"Our priority is ensuring home buyers have access to all available listings so they can make informed decisions and find the right home for their needs," said Rich Rosa, co-founder of Buyers Brokers Only. "Private listing networks restrict home buyer and real estate agent access to homes for sale. It's important to highlight this issue, especially during National Consumer Protection Week."

Home buyers should be free to choose a real estate professional who has their best interests in mind. Private listing networks force buyers to work with specific agents, often locking them into commission agreements before seeing available homes. Additionally, the practice increases the likelihood of dual agency, where the same agent or brokerage represents both the buyer and the seller, which limits negotiation power for home buyers.





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*Rich Rosa, co-founder of
Buyers Brokers Only*

"Home buyers rely on buyer agents to guide them through a real estate transaction," Rosa added. "Private listing networks exist to steer home buyers to homes by agents in the same brokerage and capture more commission, [resulting in dual agency](#). It's anti-consumer, pure and simple."

For example, when a real estate agent lists a home within a private listing network, they cannot fully represent the best interests of either the seller or the buyer. Without a dedicated advocate, home buyers may lack the guidance necessary to conduct thorough due diligence before making one of the most significant financial commitments

of their lives. This lack of representation can leave buyers vulnerable to overpaying, missing critical property issues, negotiating without vital information, or agreeing to unfavorable terms.

- Hidden Costs of Private Listings -

Listing agents list most homes for sale on a multiple listing service (MLS), which is widely shared across real estate platforms, ensuring buyers and their agents have equal access to available properties. Private listing networks, by contrast, limit visibility to an exclusive group, preventing many home buyers from seeing available homes and forcing them to work with certain brokerages to gain access.

Studies have shown that private listing networks harm buyers and sellers, costing both parties money. Zillow research showed homes sold off the MLS in Massachusetts yielded more than \$20,000 less than homes sold on the MLS.

Sellers who list on private networks reduce their home's visibility, leading to fewer competing buyers and lower sale prices. For home buyers, this means fewer available homes and less negotiating power. A fully transparent marketplace ensures home buyers see all homes available, increasing their chances of finding the right home at a fair price.

"Buyers deserve the ability to see all homes available for sale, not just those that certain brokerages choose to show them," Buyers Brokers Only co-founder David Kres stated. "Sellers deserve the best price and terms possible for their homes, which only happens when listings are visible to the largest pool of home buyers. The real estate market should work for everyone, not just a select few."

- Fair Housing Concerns -

Private listing networks also raise concerns about potential fair housing violations. Consumer

advocates, including the National Fair Housing Alliance and the National Association of Hispanic Real Estate Professionals, have raised concerns about these networks as a potential means of exclusion and discrimination in housing opportunities.

For example, [a condominium association](#), with the assistance of a real estate agent, could create a private listing network that only shares available units with a select group of buyers, effectively excluding protected classes of home buyers. This practice raises serious fair housing concerns, as sellers and agents can use it to discriminate, limit access to homeownership opportunities, and restrict fair competition in the housing market.

– A Call for Industry-Wide Change –

Buyers Brokers Only urges the real estate industry, state legislatures, and regulators to commit to transparency and consumer protection by ensuring publicly available listings. Policies that promote an open and fair housing market to ensure equitable access to homes for sale are critical.

"The solution is simple: full transparency benefits and protects everyone," Rosa added. "Sellers should have their listings seen by the widest audience, and buyers should have access to all available homes. Our industry, lawmakers, and regulators must work together toward consumer-friendly solutions that support affordability, fair competition, and equal opportunity."

[About Buyers Brokers Only](#): Buyers Brokers Only is a consumer-focused, exclusive buyer agent real estate firm serving Central and Eastern Massachusetts, Southern New Hampshire, and Rhode Island. Since 2005, the firm has helped more than 2,000 home-buying clients purchase over \$1 billion in real estate. As exclusive buyer agents, the firm's brokers are dedicated solely to protecting the interests of home-buying consumers.

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