

Renters Aren't Taking Advantage of Rent-With-Right-to-Purchase Program

Renters face many problems that they wouldn't face as owners. Not only do they face uncontrolled rent increases, they don't even know that their lease will be renewed. There's always the risk that their landlord might sell the home and the new owner will want it for themselves or another tenant.

Both problems are made worse if the tenant has no lease at all or has transitioned to a month-to-month lease — quite common after the initial lease term expires.

And the selection of new places to rent is small. If a tenant has to find a new place to live, he or she will be hard pressed to find a home they like — even more so if they have a pet.

Wouldn't it be great if a renter didn't face those problems of uncontrolled rent increases and having to move? For a couple years now, Golden Real Estate has worked with a buyer who gives

tenants a 5-year rent schedule and can't be kicked out as their lease is renewed each year through that 5-year period. I'd like to see more renters take advantage of it, even if they aren't buyers.

Our buyer is Home Partners of America. They not only address those challenges, they expand the number of homes from which to choose. (And having a pet is not a problem.) That's because Home Partners will buy any townhome or home on the MLS for which the renter has been pre-qualified as the tenant. Get your invitation to apply from Golden Real Estate, and once accepted as a tenant, you log in to HomePartners.com.

which has every home on the MLS which you are qualified to rent. Instead of just displaying the sales price of the home, it displays your personal rental price.

Your contract with Home Partners, which is now your landlord, includes the rental amount for years 2 through 5, but you're under no obligation to renew. Your contract also includes a *purchase price* for each year in case you like the home and decide to purchase it at any time during the 5-year period.

Call any of us (see phone numbers below) if you or someone you know is interested.

REAL ESTATE TODAY



By **JIM SMITH, Realtor®**

Here's What Rita & I Like About Former Mayor Pete Buttigieg

From his first debate or interview, Rita and I have been drawn to Pete Buttigieg. Why? He is refreshingly articulate and well informed.

Like former president Bill Clinton, journalist Ronan Farrow, Robert Reich, Sen. Cory Booker, Susan Rice, George Stephanopoulos, and the late Sen. Russ Feingold, Buttigieg was a Rhodes Scholar. Like them, he's also unflappable.

These qualities differ markedly from those of

our current president and from those of his competitors for the Democratic nomination. I recommend his 2019 book, *Shortest Way Home*.

I don't know about our broker associates at Golden Real Estate and I won't poll them, but Rita and I will cast our primary vote for "Mayor Pete." And we can't wait to see him on the debate stage with President Trump. What a contrast that will present!
—Jim Smith

Why Wouldn't the Russians Want Trump Re-Elected? Look at His Accomplishments.

By **JIM SMITH**

This article represents the author's personal analysis and opinion. It has not been shared with or endorsed by any of our broker associates.

No world leader has done more to advance the interests of Vladimir Putin and Russia than President Trump. I write this as a former student of the Russian language (in which I am still semi-fluent) and thus as a student of the Soviet Union and now Russia. I traveled to Moscow and Leningrad in 1978 as part of an MIT alumni trip, and again in 1986, 1987 and 1988 on "citizen diplomacy" trips under the auspices of the Center for Soviet-American Dialogue in Bellingham, Washington. My last trip was to Vladivostok, the Pacific port and terminus of the Trans-Siberian railroad, in 1995, on a tour of China, Korea, Russia and Japan.

First, let's consider Putin's interests. As a former KGB officer for the Soviet Union, Putin watched helplessly as the Soviet empire disintegrated under Gorbachev. When Boris Yeltsin resigned as Russian President and appointed Putin acting president on December 31, 1999, Putin made it his goal (after pardoning Yeltsin) to return his country to its former glory as a superpower and to bring as many of the former Soviet republics as possible, including Ukraine, back into Moscow's orbit.

Key to strengthening Russia was the weakening of NATO and the European Union, and

annexing strategically important Crimea. Although that annexation occurred before Trump took office, he helped Putin succeed in weakening NATO and the EU. As a candidate, Trump called NATO "obsolete" and, as president, he hesitated to endorse Article 5, which states that an attack on one member of NATO is an attack on all members. The only time Article 5 has been invoked was in connection with the Sept. 11th attack on the United States. Trump's reluctance to support it must have made Putin very happy. He was made even happier when Trump enthusiastically supported the Brexit campaign to leave the European Union, and encouraged other European countries to follow Britain's example.

Withdrawing the United States from the Trans-Pacific Partnership and from the Paris Accord on climate change, combined with other international actions, have contributed to a reduction in America's standing on the global stage, allowing for a bigger role by Russia.

Trump's criticism of Russia's annexation of Crimea and its ongoing aggression against

Ukraine can be described as half-hearted at best. The entire theory of Ukraine interfering in the 2016 U.S. election, as recounted under oath by Fiona Hill, was a Russian narrative adopted hook, line and sinker by President Trump. It is fair to say that Trump has been duped by the Kremlin in this and other ways. Why wouldn't Putin want to keep him in the White House for another term?

Forget about collusion — it wasn't necessary for Trump to collude in 2016, and it's not necessary for him to collude now. Putin saw in Trump the perfect man to become President when he was the Republican nominee, and is happy to join the chant, "Four More Years!"

What, you might ask, about Russia helping the Sanders' campaign? I suspect that is also in support of Trump, since Sanders would be easier for Trump to defeat as a "socialist."

The lingering question is why Trump wants to advance Putin's interests.

This article is posted on my personal blog at www.JimSmithBlog.com, where you can like, share or comment on it.



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