



September 30, 2019

The Honorable Stephen D. Hambley  
Chairman, House Civil Justice Committee  
Riffe Center  
77 S. High St., 12<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215  
RE: Written Proponent Testimony, H.B. 288

Dear Chairman Hambley and Members of the House Civil Justice Committee:

On behalf of 33,000 Ohio REALTORS® we write to express our support for HB 288. This bill would prohibit the use of eminent domain for the purposes of creating a recreational trail. We recognize the need for all levels of government to be able to exercise legitimate police powers in the regulation of private property to protect the health, safety and general welfare of its citizens. Such power should only be exercised with extreme caution and as a last option. The government should provide persuasive, objective evidence that the project, and the resulting public purpose or benefit, will in fact be realized.

Although we believe eminent domain can be a useful and important tool in economic development, we have concerns with using eminent domain rights to build recreational trails as it may not be for the greater good of the public. An important component of the mission of Ohio REALTORS® is to support and protect private property rights. While public recreational trails and paths may add value in many communities, this benefit may be outweighed by the detrimental impact such a taking could have on a property owner's use and enjoyment of his own property as well as its value.

The Ohio REALTORS® support HB 288 and we appreciate your diligent work on this legislation as this is an important matter to all current and future property owners in Ohio.

Sincerely,

Beth Wanless  
Director of Government Affairs  
Ohio REALTORS®

**Anjanette Frye**, President • **Scott R. Williams**, CEO

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