



## *Ohio Clerk of Courts Association*

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June 2, 2020

Chairman Hambley, Vice-Chair Patton, Ranking Member Brown, and members of the House Civil Justice Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of House Bill 429.

Cindy Bailey  
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The Safe at Home Address Confidentiality program was established a few years ago to allow victims of domestic violence, human trafficking, rape, or sexual battery to obtain a confidential address through the Secretary of State's office. We recognize that this program is an important tool to help victims participating in the program to remain and feel safe. We support expanding the program to provide additional protection to program participants purchasing real property so that those individuals can safely and confidentially purchase a home.

In order to ensure that the address of a participant in the Safe at Home Address Confidentiality program is redacted from common pleas court filings and remains confidential, we request an amendment to House Bill 429. Our requested amendment states a program participant who is either a party to a lawsuit or a witness in a pending case may file a copy of the real property confidentiality notice to the court and request that their information become confidential. This amendment will ensure that the address of a program participant is made confidential if a lawsuit is filed after the individual has enrolled in the program. Under the current version of the bill, the county recorder sends the clerk of court a notice of the individual's participation in the program, but the clerk would only be able to make confidential an address of a participant who is involved in a current pending case. Once a program participant either initiates a lawsuit or becomes a party to a lawsuit, the program participant may let the court know that they participate in the Safe at Home Confidentiality program by providing a copy of the real property confidentiality notice, and the clerk can ensure the address remains confidential.

We would like to thank Representatives LaRe and Abrams for sponsoring this important legislation and working with us to ensure the program participants can obtain address confidentiality while participating in the judicial system.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cindy Bailey  
Clinton County Clerk of Courts  
OCCA President