



**House State and Local Government Committee  
Proponent Written Testimony for House Bill 237  
June 15, 2021**

Beth Wanless,  
Ohio REALTORS® Director of Government Affairs

Chairman Wiggam, Vice Chair John, Ranking Member Kelly, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 237.

Formed in 1910, Ohio REALTORS® is the state's largest professional trade organization with more than 36,000 members representing both residential and commercial practitioners, as well as auctioneers and appraisers. We also represent homeowners, homebuyers, and fight to protect private property rights.

Historically, our organization has opposed fees, taxes or surcharges that increase the cost of homeownership. However, today we are diverting from past positions to support the passage of HB 237, a bill that would require counties to digitize important documents related to the transfer of real property. Ohio REALTORS appreciates the attention to put recording instruments related to the conveyance of real property online in all 88 counties by January 1, 2024.

If the COVID-19 pandemic shed light on anything, it is that functioning online systems are more critical than ever. In 2020, the Ohio legislature wisely required county offices to remain open to the public and operational during the COVID stay at home order to continue allowing the transfer of real property. By creating an online system to record and access documents, future efforts to view these documents will be safer, faster, and easier.

We are grateful to Chair Wiggam, sponsor Representative Hillyer and members of this committee for being mindful of the rising costs of homeownership, and for carefully considering any fees, taxes, or surcharges that may make it more difficult for Ohioans to achieve the American Dream of homeownership. We support the amendment to reduce the document preservation surcharge from \$10 to \$5. Again, although we oppose any type of increase on homeownership, no matter how small it may seem, we are appreciative of the reduction in the document preservation surcharge and we write in support of House Bill 237.



**Seth Task, CRS, GREEN**, 2021 President • **Scott R. Williams**, CEO  
200 E. Town St. • Columbus, OH 43215-4648

P 614.228.6675 • F 614.228.2601 • [info@ohiorealtors.org](mailto:info@ohiorealtors.org) • [www.ohiorealtors.org](http://www.ohiorealtors.org)

