



Hamilton County
Landbank

November 28, 2022

The Honorable Derek Merrin
Chairman, Ohio House Ways and Means Committee
77 South High Street, 13th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Chairman Merrin and members of the House Ways and Means Committee:

On behalf of the Hamilton County Land Bank based in Cincinnati, Ohio, I write to support Substitute Senate Bill 112, sponsored by Senator Dolan.

For more than a decade, land banks across Ohio have successfully leveraged the tools created by the Ohio General Assembly to reposition blighted property. Acting as nimbly as the private sector, without the need for general taxpayer funding, county land banks have helped to return over 30,000 vacant and abandoned properties to productive use, leveraging over \$1 billion in investment for Ohio's communities. As a result of this success, the number of land banks across the state has steadily climbed, with County Commissioners in over 60 of Ohio's 88 counties choosing to create land banks.

In Southwest Ohio, the Hamilton County Land Bank has led these efforts, returning over 1,000 abandoned properties to productive use, increasing the tax revenue collected on these properties from zero to \$3 million, saving historic structures through our stabilization program, creating homeownership opportunities, transforming neighborhood business districts and supporting the creation of good-paying jobs through industrial revitalization. This work improves the quality of life of all residents in a measurable way by decreasing crime, reducing environmental contamination, spurring development, and increasing community vibrancy and quality of life.

To stay relevant and productive for Ohio's diverse communities, county land banking law must be adjusted and honed. Substitute Senate Bill 112 makes these important technical changes to tax foreclosure and land banking law in Ohio, specifically including permitting access to determine environmental contamination and to publish notices electronically. The bill was unanimously approved by the Senate early this year, and we hope that it will find unanimous support in the House as well. Modernizing land banking in Ohio will allow land banks to accomplish even more, removing blighted and abandoned properties and spurring economic development projects in communities across Ohio.

Thank you for your timely consideration of this important bill.

Respectfully,

Philip Denning
Executive Vice President
Hamilton County Land Reutilization Corporation