



**Ohio REALTORS® Written Proponent Testimony for House Bill 2**  
**March 8, 2021**

Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Hottinger, and Ranking Member Maharath, and members of the Ohio Senate Financial Institutions and Technology Committee. I appreciate the opportunity to write on behalf of Ohio REALTORS® in support of House Bill 2, a bill that would expand broadband access across Ohio with an emergency clause to allow the program to be implemented immediately. We thank Representatives Carfagna and Stewart for sponsoring this important legislation and bringing attention to underserved communities that lack access to broadband.

Ohio REALTORS® represents more than 35,000 members who serve all communities – both large and small – across the Great State of Ohio. Many REALTORS® reside in areas of the state where accessing high speed internet to operate their small business is a non-issue, however far too many members live in areas that are underserved by broadband access. Unfortunately, this is the case for many homeowners, students, and businesses here Ohio.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic we were aware of these inequities. However, in the midst of the pandemic that has forced tens of thousands of Ohioans to work remotely, the severity of the issue is heightened and the importance of filling those gaps has become even more critical. At Ohio REALTORS® we desire success for all our members and their businesses. By expanding access to high speed internet across our state, the ability for real estate professionals to offer their clients the most current technological tools when purchasing either a residential or commercial property would greatly improve.

Additionally, it goes without saying that a home “on the grid” is more desirable than a home that cannot get access to today’s technology, especially as the COVID-19 pandemic has forever changed how we work. In fact, in the Journal of Applied Economics, a 2019 article<sup>1</sup> found that single-family homes with access to broadband connection have a price that is roughly \$6,000 more, or 3% more than similar homes with significantly slower or no connections. Broadband access is simply good for homeowners, and good for businesses.

Broadband expansion is a vitally important, shared benefit for all Ohioans. Expansion will improve our individual and collective connectivity and better position current and future Ohioans to meet the technological demands of tomorrow today. We encourage quick passage of House Bill 2.

Sincerely,

Scott Williams  
Chief Executive Office  
Ohio REALTORS®

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00036846.2019.1631443?journalCode=raec20>

