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**Majority Floor Leader Bill Seitz
Ohio's 30th House District**

February 21st, 2023

Sponsor Testimony for House Bill 50: Create mechanism to allow relief-collateral sanction for housing

Chair Abrams, Vice Chair Williams, Ranking Member Brown, and members of the Criminal Justice Committee, it is my pleasure to present sponsor testimony on HB 50. I am happy to be joined by my joint sponsor, Representative Humphrey.

HB 50 establishes certificates of qualification for housing (CQHs) that will assist individuals with criminal records overcome housing barriers due to collateral sanctions and housing bars. This is an excellent step in reducing recidivism and homelessness in Ohio and will also greatly assist individuals in assimilating back into society.

This legislation's CQH policy would work in the following way: First, as previously noted, the bill will provide relief for most in-state convictions, both felonies and misdemeanors. Next, the bill provides reasonable standards for courts when considering the issuance or denial of a certificate. During this decision making process, the court will review the applicant's criminal history (excluding records that have been sealed), and the applicants emotional, mental, and physical condition, among other factors. During this decision making process, the bill also sets reasonable deadlines for the court to issue an approval or denial of a certificate. Finally, the bill provides a pathway to establish a rebuttable presumption of rehabilitation of the petitioner.

HB 50 also affords protections to public and private housing entities who provide housing to individuals with a CQH by limiting liability that may ensue for assisting individuals with a CQH. This legislation further allows these housing entities to consider potential residents who have obtained a CQH on a case-by-case basis.

This is not the first proposal of its kind in Ohio. In fact, since 2012, individuals with criminal histories could obtain a certificate of qualified employment (CQE), a certificate to assist individuals facing collateral sanctions relating to employment. This legislation, in tandem with existing CQE laws, are an excellent step in helping Ohioans get back to work, and maintain a safe place to live.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on HB 50. We would be happy to answer any questions at this time.