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HB 3 Testimony
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Chairman Swearingen, Vice Chairman Santucci, Ranking Member Upchurch, and members of the House Workforce and Economic Development Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on House Bill 3.

My name is Tracie Hawes. I live at Kent Place which is an affordable housing community in the Driving Park Neighborhood on East Livingston Avenue here is Columbus.

I have lived at Kent Place in a four-bedroom home for the past five years. Prior to living here, I lived in a very run-down single-family house, which was quite frankly run by a slumlord. It was not a good living situation for me or my family, and I had to work very hard to find a better alternative.

When Kent Place was built, I was attracted to it because it was brand new in a neighborhood that is becoming revitalized. I also liked that was a single-family home, unlike the more common multi-family affordable apartments. Kent Place offered a much better quality of living for me and my family, and it frankly gave me and my family a fresh start.

I'm a mother of seven children, ages 15 through 8, including two sets of twins. Like most moms, I will do everything in my power to provide a good home for my kids so they can grow up in a safe, stable environment.

Three of my children attend Columbus Public Schools and four of them are enrolled at Patriot Preparatory Academy on the east side of town. Patriot Prep is considered one of the best public, charter schools in Columbus and I'm really proud my children are students there.

I work full-time as a Director of Childcare Center. I have been in the childcare field for 15 years and have been the Director for the past seven years. Our childcare center serves about 50-60 children per day, and they come from many families like mine where the cost and quality of housing are really important.

In my profession, and with seven children, I probably don't have to tell you, but money can be tight. So, I have to be careful and frugal. That's also one of the reasons Kent Place was so attractive.

I pay rent every month and I do not receive any kind of housing voucher. But the rent is affordable, and it has allowed me to put a good roof over our heads.

The other thing I really like about Kent Place is that I have an option to purchase my home after 15 years. I'm sure I'll have to prove sufficient income and credit scores and maybe other factors when the time comes, but the opportunity to own my own home is something I look forward to.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I'm not an expert on all the details that are in HB 3, but from what I've understand, it would help build more affordable homes like Kent Place. And if that helps more working families like mine, I'm all for it. I hope you will consider passing HB 3.

I am happy to answer any questions.

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