



**Rep. Scott Wiggam**  
**77<sup>th</sup> Ohio House District**

Chairman Swearingen, Vice-Chair Santucci, Ranking Member Upchurch and Members of the House Economic and Workforce Development Committee.

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to present Sponsor testimony on HB 547.

HB 33, the State Operating budget for fiscal year 2024 and 2025, allowed for \$400 million in tax credits over four years for the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program. Unfortunately, individuals unlawfully present in the United States can access low-income housing tax credit project housing therefore leaving lawful residents in need of low-income housing opportunities. These funds should be available to citizens and lawful immigrants only, and HB 547 if enacted will ensure just that.

According to the Congressional Research Service in a report prepared for Committees and Members of Congress on January 23, 2023, "...there are no current federal noncitizen eligibility restrictions for LIHTC units." Furthermore, the same report states, "While there are no federal restrictions to noncitizen eligibility, individual LIHTC property owners and managers may elect to require that tenants provide proof of legal residency in the United States...".<sup>1</sup> My office has provided this report to the committee for your review, and it can also be found in the footnotes of my testimony.

The Central Ohio region is on track to reach 3.15 million residents by 2050, and according to a report commissioned by the Building Industry Association (BIA) of Central Ohio, housing projects must increase by almost double to meet these projections.<sup>2</sup> The report continues to say Central Ohio needs to be building 14,000-19,000 apartments every year to keep up with demand.

All of this goes to say that as Ohio grows lawful citizens need to be a priority. Low-income housing should be available to citizens and lawful immigrants of Ohio, not illegal immigrants. Money our state appropriates should be for the people who pay taxes, and this legislation is a first step of many to make sure that stays true.

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<sup>1</sup> Page 15 <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R46462>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.morpc.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Population\\_Growth\\_Forecast\\_2024-50.pdf](https://www.morpc.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Population_Growth_Forecast_2024-50.pdf)

Thank you once again for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important legislation, and I will now pass the microphone to my joint sponsor Representative Gross.