

Representative Tom Patton
House Bill 85 Sponsor Testimony
House State and Local Government Committee
May 2nd, 2023

Chair John, Vice Chair Dean, Ranking Member Brennan, and the Members of the House State and Local Government Committee, I would like to thank you for the opportunity and honor to stand in front of you today and provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 85. House Bill 85 aims to expand methods by which land banks acquire delinquent property. As a refresher, a county land bank is an organization that acquires land or properties with the goal of restoring the land to return to a productive use.

House Bill 85 has a main purpose to allow the county land banks in Ohio to acquire occupied, often distressed homes that the owner and, or landlord allowed to get foreclosed upon ending up in tax forfeiture. Many of the occupants in these homes are individuals who have been deceived by their landlords who have been collecting rents, but not paying the taxes. Others may be legitimate land contract buyers who have been faithfully paying their monthly payments only to learn later that the home was foreclosed upon. House Bill 85 allows properties to be acquired by Land banks by paying either: the full amount of the taxes, or the value of the property by offering the delinquent owner the right to require the property to be exposed to a sale. Regardless of which way they choose to pay, the county would receive the full amount of taxes. More importantly, however, this would allow innocent residents, tenants and land contract vendees to stay in these homes rather than being evicted. The Land Banks would be responsible for transitioning these occupants into responsible home ownership once acquired by the land banks.

Chair John, Vice Chair Dean, Ranking Member Brennan, and the Members of this committee – I would like to thank you all again for allowing me to provide testimony on House Bill 85. At this time, I would be happy to answer any questions the committee may have.