

Testimony to oppose recommendations to reduce real estate education standards  
HB 238 – Reps. Fowler Arthur and Klopfenstein  
Ohio House State and Local Government Committee  
Marilyn John, Chairwoman

Presented by: Qiana Jones, Managing Broker  
Premier Just Listed  
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Chairwoman John, Vice-Chair Dean, Ranking Member Brennan and members of the House State and Local Government Committee:

My name is Qiana Jones, and I am the Managing Broker of Just Listed Real Estate. I also serve as the President of the Columbus Realtist® Association and am the Board Chair of the Ohio Realtist® Association. In addition, I serve as the 2nd Vice-President of the Women's Council of Ohio of the National Association of Real Estate Brokers and am a Director of the Columbus Realtors and Ohio Realtors. I have been a licensed Salesperson since 2014 and a licensed Broker since 2022. I have provided expertise on real estate matters by engaging with local politicians and through continuing education courses. I have spoken on panels discussing fair housing for the Mortgage Bankers Association and Fannie Mae to name a few.

I became aware of an effort in the Ohio General Assembly to reduce education and quality standards in the real estate industry and I wanted to be here today as someone who is committed to this industry. I believe in the value of my license and the quality of the professionals that enter this industry. Why are we trying to diminish the level of expertise of salespersons and brokers? I have never heard anyone complain that it takes too long to become a salesperson or we learn too much. I would argue instead that the industry could use higher standards, more rigorous education and help in developing the salespeople entering the market.

At the Ohio and Columbus Realtist® Associations we are focused on addressing problems that are too often encountered by minority home seekers in their quest for adequate and affordable housing. We help promote high standards of professional integrity and ethics and believe that strong accreditation and education is required by our professionals. Ultimately, professionals need to be well-educated in fair and equal housing and financial services to make sustainable homeownership realized for all populations, especially minorities. Everything taught in the 120-hour training program is essential in ensuring real estate professionals are knowledgeable and competent to handle transactions involving hundreds of thousands of dollars and upwards of one million dollars or more. I don't know what could be eliminated from the training while still maintaining professional standards and quality agents and brokers. I am proud that Ohio is a state that demands the highest of integrity from their education providers and we can rely on an institution of higher education to protect agents and consumers from fly by night shops that take the money from the agents and disappear. A salesperson or broker without proper education will ultimately pay more in fines, fees, and increased exposure to lawsuits. In addition, what protections will be in place to make sure those students are completing the coursework and prepared for the exam? What governing body will be shaping courses to ensure success in the industry?

As a broker, I appreciated the degree-quality education I received to help prepare me to move into a management career and run my business. If you change the Broker education requirements, please leave the degree as a viable option. I understand that an experienced salesperson with significant

experience and qualifications with additional education and testing could move into a broker position, I think it is a mistake, however, to completely remove the degree track to becoming a broker.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my experience in the real estate profession. I hope this committee will support the current protections that exist in the industry and that we will continue to ensure that salespersons who enter the market are accredited and qualified to help Ohio's home buyers and sellers with accessible and affordable housing.

I am happy to answer any questions.