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**Written Proponent Testimony – HB 263**  
**Ohio Poverty Law Center**  
**House Ways and Means Committee**

Chair Roemer, Vice Chair Lorenz, Ranking Member Troy, and members of the House Ways and Means Committee, my name is Danielle DeLeon Spires, and I am a policy advocate at the Ohio Poverty Law Center. The Ohio Poverty Law Center advocates for evidence-based policies that protect and expand the rights of low-income Ohioans. We are a non-profit law firm working closely with Ohio's legal aid community, serving Ohioans who are living, working, and raising their families in poverty. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written proponent testimony on House Bill 263 to authorize a property tax freeze for certain owner-occupied homes.

House Bill 263 proposes a property tax reduction for householders who meet all of the following requirements: the householder is at least 70 years of age or older, has continuously lived in their home for ten or more years, has an annual total income less than or equal to \$70,000 (as adjusted for inflation in subsequent years), and has a home that has a true value less than \$1.0 million.

Despite a decrease in Ohio's poverty rate, the state's poverty rate is higher than the U.S. poverty rate of 12.3 percent. This includes 8.1% Ohio seniors (age 65 and older) who were in poverty in 2019. Nearly 13.1% of Ohioans are living in poverty—earning less than \$23,030 annually for a family of three—according to the Ohio Association of Community Action Agencies' (OACAA) State of Poverty in Ohio report. These Ohioans face legal issues and other problems that are intensified by living in poverty, such as a lack of suitable housing; access to health care, food assistance, or disability assistance; domestic violence; education inequity; and employment and income instability. More than one out of every three Ohio households lack the liquid assets need to stay out of poverty for three months.

This legislation would provide assistance to seniors at a time of record increases in property values. Creating this opportunity will allow for more Ohioans to remain in their homes as they age and provide stability amidst rising economic costs.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written proponent testimony on House Bill 263.

Sincerely,

Danielle DeLeon Spires



**Danielle DeLeon Spires (she/her/hers)**

**Policy Advocate**

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