



Proponent Testimony for Ohio House Bill 254

Chairman and Members of the Committee,

I am testifying on behalf of USA Cares to express strong support for House Bill 254, which seeks to enhance the Homestead Tax Exemptions for disabled veterans in Ohio. USA Cares is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing financial support and stability to military families, and we firmly believe that this legislation aligns with our mission to combat the increasing rates of veteran suicide which currently costs our nation 22 veterans per day.

Our organization has witnessed firsthand the critical role that financial stability plays in the well-being of veterans and their families. The stresses associated with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), traumatic brain injury (TBI), and other service-related challenges are immense. Financial pressures, unfortunately, exacerbate these challenges and can lead to dire consequences, including the alarming rise in veteran suicides.

House Bill 254 presents a unique opportunity to address this issue directly by expanding the Homestead Tax Exemptions for disabled veterans. By alleviating the financial burdens on these individuals, we not only honor their sacrifices but also contribute to the fight against veteran suicide. Stable and secure homes play a pivotal role in providing the support structure needed for veterans to navigate the challenges they face, particularly those stemming from their service.

As a nonprofit organization deeply committed to the well-being of our nation's veterans, we have seen how financial assistance can be a lifeline for those struggling with the invisible wounds of war. The proposed amendments in this bill will undoubtedly enhance the quality of life for disabled veterans and their families, fostering an environment where they can focus on healing and reintegration into civilian life.

By expanding the Homestead Tax Exemptions, Ohio has an opportunity to lead the way in recognizing the unique needs of disabled veterans and setting an example for the rest of the nation. This legislation not only supports the noble cause of honoring our veterans but also has the potential to save lives by mitigating the financial stressors that contribute to the tragic phenomenon of veteran suicide.

I encourage each member of the committee to consider the profound impact that House Bill 254 can have on the lives of Ohio's disabled veterans and their families. Your support for this bill is a tangible demonstration of Ohio's commitment to those who have sacrificed so much for our freedom. Thank you for your time and consideration of this critical legislation. Together, we can make a significant difference in the lives of our veterans.

Matt Castor
Vice President, USA Cares