



**Senate Local Government Committee
House Bill 315
Proponent Testimony
November 19, 2024**

Chair O'Brien, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member DeMora and members of the Senate Local Government Committee, thank you for considering this written testimony in support of HB 315 on behalf of Ohio REALTORS®. Formed in 1910, Ohio REALTORS® is the state's largest professional trade association with approximately 36,000 members representing both residential and commercial practitioners.

Our testimony today is focused on the \$1.5 million per year for the Housing Technical Assistance Grant program aimed at supporting local governments in modernizing regulations and zoning relating to residential housing development. The housing shortage in Ohio is well documented: over the past decade, home values have nearly doubled, while median household incomes have increased by only about 13.5%. The National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) has determined that in Ohio, there are over 100,000 missing single-family housing permits. This indicates a substantial gap between the demand for housing and its supply that exacerbates affordability issues and limits options for prospective homeowners across the state.

There is no one-size-fits-all solution to address Ohio's housing challenges; however, this funding could assist local governments in reviewing their zoning codes and implementing strategies to increase housing supply.

Restrictive zoning requirements contribute to the housing shortage by presenting barriers that block new housing construction or drive-up costs to the point that new developments become financially prohibitive. Unfortunately, many local governments lack the resources to modernize their outdated zoning regulations, which is why this funding is so necessary. While \$1.5 million per year is a notable start, we anticipate that local demand for this funding will far exceed this amount, and we encourage the legislature to consider providing more funding under this grant program. It is also important to note that this funding is not tied to any mandates on local governments, but is instead designed to assist those local governments that voluntarily pursue zoning updates.

At Ohio REALTORS®, we are collaborating with other stakeholders to develop a pattern book of housing designs that local governments could adopt. Housing designs meeting these criteria could receive expedited approval and significantly reduce the cost of housing construction. The Housing Technical Assistance Grant Program would provide local governments with the resources needed to incorporate these pattern books into their planning, thus making housing more affordable to their residents.

Thank you for considering our testimony. We urge you to support the creation of the Housing Technical Assistance Grant Program in HB 315.

Sincerely,

Scott Williams
Chief Executive Officer
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