

May 23, 2022

The Honorable Louis W. Blessing, III  
Chair, Senate Ways and Means Committee  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor - 041  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Re: Senate Bill 118 – Proponent Testimony

Dear Chairman Blessing, Vice Chair Roegner, and Ranking Member Smith:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide the City of Cincinnati's (the "City's") testimony in support of Senate Bill 118. The creation of new housing units in the City is a necessary step toward providing access to safe and secure housing for our growing population. Homeownership is an important facet of that growth. Senate Bill 118 provides a valuable tool to encourage homeownership that citizens of the City could benefit from. In addition to providing testimony in support of that legislation, I am also writing to emphasize that more assistance is needed to make meaningful progress on addressing the lack of housing options in the State of Ohio, including in the City.

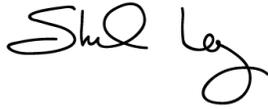
Senate Bill 118 provides a credit to income tax for the creation of single-family housing. Coupled with the City's residential tax abatement program, Senate Bill 118 could be a catalyst to the development of property in the City for the dedicated purpose of expanding homeownership. Based upon a recently commissioned study, 62% of occupied units are renter-occupied in the City, with homeownership rates declining by 8% since 2010. Action needs to be taken to reverse this trend since homeownership is a pathway to wealth creation for our residents.

Senate Bill 118 provides needed support to furthering homeownership. Care must be taken to ensure that the credits proposed by Senate Bill 118 are available to those that need it most and are not utilized solely by higher income areas in the State of Ohio.

In order to successfully create more housing available to all income levels, a multi-pronged approach is required. House Bill 33, which includes a \$500 million state tax credit akin to the federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit, is also necessary to encourage the construction of new affordable housing units. The shortage of housing options is a difficult problem without just one solution. I encourage the Ohio legislature to appropriate funds for programs that create new housing units or cause the renovation of housing units in support of all income levels.

Thank you for your consideration. The City supports the passage of Senate Bill 118, with the understanding that additional action is necessary to make housing more affordable.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sheryl Long". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sheryl" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Long".

Sheryl M.M. Long  
City Manager