

## Speech Summary:

Joseph Sandlin, a senior pastor, former licensed social worker, real estate broker, and elected official, discusses the challenges faced by Ohio communities due to the overgrowth of recovery housing and addiction services.

- **Impact on Local Housing Markets** Recovery housing companies are purchasing homes typically meant for first-time buyers, leading to a housing crisis in Scioto County and Portsmouth, Ohio. This results in unaffordable rent rates for single-family renters.
- **Safety and Neighborhood Concerns** Citizens are worried about safety and the value of their homes as neighborhoods transform into streets filled with recovery housing group homes. There are instances of overcrowded and poorly maintained recovery houses, exacerbating the issue.

**Support for House Bill 58** Sandlin advocates House Bill 58, which introduces regulations to control the sprawl of recovery housing through local oversight boards. He believes this bill is crucial to protect communities and provide necessary oversight. licensed social worker, real estate broker, and elected official, discusses the challenges faced by Ohio communities due to the overgrowth of recovery housing and addiction services.

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## **Actual Speech**

At what point can a local community declare that they have given enough. What is the reasonable expectation of our Ohio Cities, Towns and Villages to support and accommodate the needs of our addicted population. The mere question could cause the casual observer to think that by even asking such a question shows we really do not care or have compassion for our recovery communities; but this is simply not true. You see my life's calling and career choices have given me experiences and insight into this very pressing and complex problem called recovery housing! I have been a senior pastor of one of the largest Christian Churches in Adams County Ohio for the past 35 years and I have spent my entire life ministering to the addicted and their families. I've personally held the hands of far too many young people while they drew their last breath because of the destruction of addiction. My family experienced the destruction of addiction firsthand as I officiated the funeral of my own sister-in-law. In addition to my experience as a minister, I also received my license as an LSW (licensed Social Worker) in 2010 and I worked for Scioto Paint Valley Mental Health, the 5th largest mental health provider in the State of Ohio for several years. As well I stand here today as a Professional real estate broker of 21 years working in the housing markets of Adams, Brown, and Scioto Counties of Ohio. Brokering mainly residential housing. For the past 4 years I have served my Home City of Portsmouth Ohio as a Portsmouth City Councilman and this past November I became Scioto

County's Treasurer elect winning the county Treasurer's seat election by a large margin. So, when I say I have witnessed firsthand the problems that surround recovery housing you know I am speaking from decades of personal and professional experience. Simply put, I stand here today very thankful to address this distinguished committee and to say; ladies and gentlemen, Honorable State Representatives of Ohio, we need your help. I stand in full support today of House Bill 58 sponsored by my State Representative the Honorable Justin Pizzulli! Our cities, towns and villages need the help that this well thought out legislation provides by placing regulations on the sprawl and over growth of recovery housing. Whole communities across this great State of single-family dwellings are being transformed into streets filled with recovery housing group homes. As a Councilmen of Portsmouth Ohio, I have taken dozens of calls from concerned citizens who worry about their own safety, and the overall values of their homes and communities as their neighborhoods are being changed before their very eyes. As a realtor I have watched recovery housing take over whole segments of local real estate markets, like the inventory of housing for first time home buyers. Currently in Portsmouth and all of Scioto County we are in the mist of a housing crisis, you see there are very few houses listed that would be considered a first-time homebuyers listing. As soon as a decent first-time home buyer type home becomes available it is typically purchased by a recovery housing company. Usually, all cash purchase and at or above the asking price. Currently in

Scioto County alone we have over fifty addiction and recovery treatment businesses operating which provides an ever growing need for recovery housing. Rent schedules are being raised to unaffordable rates because many home owners and investors choose to rent their homes to recovery housing needs instead of single family renters. You see an investor can rent his home to a recovery housing group home and receive a full month's rent schedule from each person that is in that group home. So instead of receiving \$800 a month rent from one single family per month, the investor can receive all most that much from each and every person in that group home every month. So a group home of 6 people can pay an investor 4 to 5 thousand dollars a month! Because addiction services are so unregulated and so lucrative, it draws companies from all over the United States and around the world. Many of which are unscrupulous and very negligent in their business practices. As a Portsmouth City Councilmen I was made aware of a group home that our code enforcement officer was forced to deal with in which 9 men were kept in a home that legally only was to house 6 people, in that same home we discovered that there also was no electricity and no running water, the resident men of said group home were forced to use a porta-potty set up in the back yard of this residential neighborhood home. The owner was a recovery housing and addiction services business whose main office is out of New Jersey. The problems surrounding addiction services and recovery housing over growth is also increasing our homeless population. Single family housing

is being made unaffordable and more and more people are being priced out of their rental homes. In Portsmouth Ohio we are a small city of only 18,000 residents and yet we currently have 9 homeless encampments (tent cities) inside of our city. Our Public Schools, job and family services, and children services, all struggle to provide a proper education and the very basic needs to so many families and orphaned children that are left behind in the wake of this terrible problem. I believe that House Bill 58 is a great start to try and regulate this over growth and sprawl of Recovery Housing. The "certificate of need" regulation that is in this bill will give local boards the power of much needed oversight of the needs, conditions and problems caused by recovery houses in our local communities. House Bill 58 to me is an answer of prayer to help our Ohio Communities through much needed State regulations and local oversight boards which will provide protections to all our citizens of the great State of Ohio. Therefore I stand here today as a Pastor of a local church and a businessman of a local real estate office and an elected official to Portsmouth City Council and Scioto County's Treasurer elect to give my full support to House Bill 58.

Thank You for the opportunity to Speak on this very important issue

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