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**Committees:**  
Local Government  
Community Revitalization  
Veterans and Military Development

**HB 135 Sponsor Testimony**  
**House Community Revitalization Committee**  
**April 1, 2025**

Chairman Click, Vice Chair Mullins, Ranking Member Brewer, and members of the House Community Revitalization Committee, thank you, again, for the opportunity to present sponsor testimony on House Bill 135.

In a state where access to quality and affordable housing is inaccessible to many of its current and prospective residents, this bill seeks to alleviate some of the burdens faced by an already stressed population by strengthening our existing fair housing laws to prohibit income-based rental discrimination by landlords towards current and prospective tenants in our state.

It's important to note that this bill will not prohibit landlords from verifying a tenant's or prospective tenant's lawful source of income. The bill does, however, expand what constitutes as a lawful source of income to include federal low-income housing assistance, the Ohio Works First Program, grants and loans administered by the Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA), Medicaid, veterans benefits, benefits under the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the women, infants, and children (WIC) program, and Social Security, as many of these programs are the sole or main determinants for landlords to deny housing.

It is our firm belief that a person's utilization of need-based programs, subsidies, and entitlements such as Social Security, should not be an adverse condition on their ability to secure a place to live. Many municipalities across the state, including my hometown of Reynoldsburg, Columbus, Cleveland Heights, South Euclid, Akron, and Yellow Springs, have passed ordinances outlawing the practice of income-based rental discrimination in their respective communities. These municipalities realize that safe and affordable housing should be treated as a basic right. This bill seeks to make that a closer reality statewide.

We respectfully ask for your consideration of House Bill 135 and welcome any questions the committee may have. Thank you.