Chairman Click and distinguished members of the Community Revitalization Committee, thank you for taking the time to hear testimony on House Bill 585.

My name is Michael Denlinger. I am an advocate and someone who personally benefits from accessible housing. I am here to testify in support of House Bill 585, which would improve the flexibility of the Community Capital Assistance Funds.

Ohio faces a severe shortage of affordable housing, and the shortage of affordable, accessible housing is even more significant. The Community Capital Assistance Fund was created to help address this gap for individuals served by County Boards of Developmental Disabilities. While these funds have done a great deal of good over the past several decades, the needs and preferences of those served by County Boards have evolved, and the rules governing the use of these funds should evolve as well.

Individuals with disabilities are as diverse as anyone else, and their housing needs and preferences vary widely. Currently, Community Capital Assistance Funds are limited to single-family homes, duplexes, and quadplexes. However, some individuals may prefer to live in larger developments, such as townhome or apartment communities, where they can live alongside others with and without disabilities. These settings can help foster stronger community connections, particularly for individuals who face barriers to transportation.

House Bill 585 would also allow these funds to be blended with other affordable housing resources. This flexibility could lead to the development of more affordable housing units for people with disabilities.

In short, increasing the flexibility of the Community Capital Assistance Funds will make it possible to create more housing units and a wider variety of housing options. It will encourage innovative solutions that better reflect the diverse needs and preferences of people with disabilities across Ohio's communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and I would be happy to answer any questions.