

March 16, 2026

The Honorable Members of the Community Revitalization Committee
Ohio House of Representatives
77 South High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

RE: Proponent Testimony – House Bill 585

Chair Click, Vice Chair Mullins, Ranking Member Brewer, and members of the Community Revitalization Committee:

My name is Kevin Nowak, and I am the President and CEO CHN Housing Partners, a 44-year-old Cleveland, OH based non-profit affordable housing developer, service provider, and mortgage lender, whose mission focuses on leveraging stable, affordable housing to change lives and improve communities.

<https://chnhousingpartners.org/>

I am writing to express **support for House Bill 585**, which clarifies the authority of the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) to adopt rules governing the use of Community Capital Assistance (CCA) funds to support housing opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities receiving supported living services.

Access to safe, affordable, and community-based housing is essential for individuals with developmental disabilities to live independently and fully participate in their communities. House Bill 585 helps ensure that Community Capital Assistance funds can be used more effectively to expand housing options and support innovative housing models that meet the diverse needs of individuals receiving services.

The bill provides important flexibility by expanding the types of housing eligible for CCA funding and by allowing these funds to be combined with other financing sources. We are particularly supportive of the bill's intent to allow CCA funds to be used for dwelling units within multifamily housing developments - defined by HUD as buildings containing five or more units - and to layer with financing sources such as Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) and multifamily revenue bonds. Under current administrative rules (OAC 5123:1-1-03), CCA funds are limited to single-family homes, duplexes, and quadplexes. This restriction excludes the very housing type that produces the majority of new affordable units in Ohio. Expanding CCA eligibility to include multifamily housing will help county boards, providers, and affordable housing developers create integrated, community-based housing at significantly lower per-unit costs.

Ohio's existing Section 811 Project Rental Assistance program - a partnership between OHFA, DODD, and the Ohio Department of Medicaid - already demonstrates that individuals with developmental disabilities thrive in integrated multifamily settings, with units dispersed throughout LIHTC-financed properties. HB 585 would align CCA's capital investment authority with this proven model, reinforcing Ohio's commitment to community integration consistent with the Olmstead decision.

In the spirit of strengthening the bill, we respectfully suggest one technical refinement. Section (B)(1) currently uses the term "multi-structure dwellings". We recommend replacing this term with "dwelling units within multifamily housing" to align with established definition used in ORC Chapter 175.01(Q) and with HUD's standard definition of multifamily housing as a residential building containing five or more units (12 USC § 1715z-22a). Using recognized definitions will ensure clean alignment between DODD's CCA program and OHFA's multifamily financing programs - which is exactly the kind of cross-agency layering this bill is designed to facilitate. Specifically, we suggest the following revised language for Section (B)(1):

(B)(1) Specify that community capital assistance funds may be used to acquire or construct a single-family home, a duplex, a quadplex, a permanently sited manufactured home, a condominium, newly constructed housing, accessory dwelling units, dwelling units within multifamily housing, or other housing models;

Equally important, the legislation emphasizes the role of individuals receiving services in helping choose the type of housing in which they live, reinforcing Ohio's commitment to person-centered planning and community integration.

We believe House Bill 585 will strengthen Ohio's ability to support individuals with developmental disabilities by allowing them to live in homes of their choosing within their communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this important legislation. We respectfully urge the committee to support House Bill 585.

Sincerely,



Kevin J. Nowak
President and CEO
CHN Housing Partners