



Cuyahoga County Land Reutilization Corporation

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Cuyahoga Land Bank Proponent Testimony

House Development Committee

Support for The Gus Frangos Act (HB86)

Chairman Hoops, Vice Chair Lorenz, Ranking Member Abdullahi, and members of the House Development Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony. My name is Ricardo León, and I have the honor of serving as the President & CEO of the Cuyahoga Land Bank.

The purpose of this testimony is to express strong support from the Cuyahoga Land Bank for House Bill 86, also known as the Gus Frangos Act. This comprehensive legislation is a much-needed modernization of Ohio's land banking and tax foreclosure statutes, and we are proud to support a bill that bears the name of our founding President and General Counsel, Gus Frangos, a true pioneer in land banking and a national thought leader on vacant property law and policy.

HB 86 addresses a range of practical and legal challenges that have emerged over the past 15 years of land bank operations. Critically, the bill ensures compliance with the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in *Tyler v. Hennepin County* by safeguarding surplus equity for former property owners. At the same time, it empowers local governments with updated tools to responsibly manage vacant, abandoned, and tax-delinquent properties.

The bill expands collaboration by authorizing land banks to assist townships—longtime partners in need of demolition and remediation resources. It introduces a Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) mechanism, enabling strategic reinvestment in distressed areas. And it codifies long-sought tax and liability clarifications, including tax-exempt status for land banks and immunity for safety inspections of vacant property under court order.

The Gus Frangos Act reflects real-world experience, shaped by input from county treasurers, auditors, prosecutors, and land banks like ours. It improves clarity, strengthens due process, and enhances our ability to return vacant and abandoned properties to productive use.

We thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration of this bill. We urge your support of HB 86 and stand ready to continue working together to build stronger, healthier communities across Ohio.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "RL" or "Ricardo León".

Ricardo León
President & CEO