



Dear Chair Stewart, Vice Chair Dovilla, Ranking Member Sweeney, and members of the House Finance Committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide written comments in support of House Bill 476, which would authorize charitable nonprofit organizations to sell raffle tickets online.

House Bill 476 is a focused piece of legislation aimed at supporting nonprofit organizations by explicitly legalizing the sale of online raffle tickets, a method that has been commonly used in Ohio for many years. Recently, the Ohio Attorney General issued cease and desist letters to several organizations, stating that online raffle ticket sales violate the current Ohio Revised Code. HB 476 seeks to address this issue by codifying online raffle sales, ensuring that nonprofit organizations can continue to raise funds in this manner. HB 476 would restore clarity and security to nonprofit fundraising efforts, allowing these organizations to focus on serving their communities without legal uncertainty.

As a local non-profit, we at Habitat for Humanity in Wayne County, consistently seek ways to partner with the surrounding community for the purpose of continuing our mission of building homes, community, and hope. We work with families who earn fifty percent below the median income. As a result of this, we work diligently to keep costs affordable for them by offering a thirty-year interest free mortgage. In April of 2025 we hosted our first online raffle with the goal of raising funds to help support our home building projects. These home builds are a direct investment in the futures of our partner families. The response from the surrounding community, and individuals throughout the state of Ohio, was remarkable. The raffle was a success and we have already begun to make plans to host another online raffle in the Spring of 2026.

In August of 2025, we were made aware of a letter from the Ohio Attorney General's office to another non-profit regarding their raffle activity. The letter stated that the online raffle activity did not meet the lawful requirements and they were to cease conducting raffles that were deemed in violation of the requirements listed in the Ohio Revised Code 2915. We subsequently contacted the Attorney General's office and were instructed that the operation of raffles, per the O.R.C. 2915, did not mention anything regarding online raffles therefore selling tickets in this manner is considered online gambling and is strictly prohibited.

Habitat for Humanity in Wayne County is committed to abiding by the law and following the direction provided by the Ohio Revised Code. In the case of online raffles, the lack of specificity in the definition and regulations results in confusion. We respectfully request that the operation of raffles, for the benefit of Non-Profit Organizations as outlined in division (V) of section 2915.01 of the Ohio Revised Code, include the operation of selling tickets online.

Sincerely,

Aaron Cochrell

Assistant Director of Habitat for Humanity in Wayne County