Occupational Licensing Board Review Testimony
Ohio Home Inspector Board

Senate Government Oversight & Reform Committee
March 25, 2026

Chair Manchester, Vice Chair Brenner, Ranking Member Weinstein, and members of the Senate Government Oversight & Reform Committee, my name is Edward Woodruff, and I am an attorney with the Division of Real Estate & Professional Licensing at the Ohio Department of Commerce. Thank you for the opportunity to provide information regarding the Ohio Home Inspector Board.

The Ohio Home Inspector Board ("Board") was created in 2019 through the enactment of Senate Bill 255 of the 132nd General Assembly. The Board's purpose and objective is to establish a minimum standard of qualifications and practices for Ohio's home inspectors. This gives potential homebuyers, making arguably the biggest purchase of their lives, peace of mind in knowing any inspector they plan to hire is properly trained and following established Ohio standards of practice.

Approximately thirty-five (35) other states have licensing requirements for home inspectors and the licensing requirements in Ohio are substantially similar to the other states. Although there are no national uniform licensure requirements for home inspectors, the Board incorporated many components into the Standards of Practice rule from the two professional member organizations' standards, both of which have been in existence for decades and are commonly accepted nationwide.

If an individual wishes to be a licensed home inspector in Ohio, they must comply with the following requirements: completion of an application, proof of minimum competency, completion of a criminal history check, have complied with O.R.C. 4764 and rules promulgated thereunder, and remittance of an application fee. One of the statutory requirements includes that the applicant pass the National Home Inspector Examination. As long as the applicant meets or exceeds these statutory criteria, they will be issued a license allowing them to serve Ohio's home buying and selling public.

There are licensure exemptions for individuals operating within the scope of another professional license. Those individuals include certified building code personnel, certified architects, registered professional engineers, individuals licensed as a specialty contractor with the Ohio Construction Industry Licensing Board, licensed real estate appraisers, licensed commercial applicators of pesticide, public insurance adjusters holding a valid certificate of authority, and licensed real estate brokers, real estate salespersons, foreign real estate dealers, and foreign real estate salespersons.

Notwithstanding Substitute HB 59, the initial licensing fee to become a home inspector is currently $250.00 and the license is due for renewal once every three years. Licensing fees for the home

inspector program are consistent with other licensing fees assessed within other comparable Ohio licensing programs (appraiser and real estate licenses), and Ohio's licensing fees are comparable with licensing fees assessed by other state home inspector licensing programs. These fees are necessary to defray the costs associated with the administration of the program and the entire licensing program is sustained through the collection of application fees associated with home inspector licenses. It is estimated the Division collects approximately $100,000 annually.

Presently there are 1,380 active home inspector licenses in Ohio and Division records indicate approximately 260 licenses are due for renewal in 2026. The Division employees five individuals who handle the day-to-day activities of the program. These five employees include the Superintendent, who oversees the administration of the program, a Division attorney, a licensing examiner and two investigators.

In summary, we ask you to please support the continued occupational licensure under the Ohio Home Inspector Board. Prior to the implementation of ORC Chapter 4764, every professional involved in a real estate transaction, except for a home inspector, was subject to licensure requirements which established minimum qualifications and standards of practice. ORC Chapter 4764 was necessary to ensure that all Ohio home inspectors, who play a critical role in a consumer's most expensive investment, were well-qualified, competent, and properly trained. This was necessary for the stability of our overall economy and in furtherance of home ownership in Ohio.

Chairwoman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to present information on this board, and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.