

**Senate Housing Committee
Proponent Testimony
Senate Bill 184
May 13th, 2025**

Chair Reynolds, Vice Chair Timken, Ranking Member Craig, and members of the Senate Housing Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today on behalf of Ohio REALTORS®. Formed in 1910, Ohio REALTORS® is the state's largest professional trade association with approximately 35,000 members representing both residential and commercial practitioners, as well as auctioneers and appraisers.

It is no secret to this committee that Ohio has a crisis-level housing shortage across the state. Nationally, it is estimated that the underbuilding gap in the U.S. totaled more than 5.5 million housing units in the last 20 years.¹ In Ohio, we have a shortage of nearly 270,000 affordable rental units and over 100,000 single-family units. As a result of the shortage, we have seen the cost of housing skyrocket, and options have narrowed for many Ohioans.

Senate Bill (SB) 184 recognizes the immediate need to expand housing supply across Ohio in areas where it is needed most. We are supportive of this bill's proposal to create Residential Economic Development Districts (REDDs) and the establishment of the Housing Accelerator Fund, which would provide local governments access to resources if they support or intend to support pro-housing initiatives. These targeted tools will empower local governments, particularly those near major economic development projects, to access grants for community development and housing-related efforts.

We support this bill's approach as it prioritizes local actions through practical incentives such as having a pre-approval process in place, investing in infrastructure, and reducing development fees. These are practical and proven steps that reduce barriers to housing construction and help ensure that families can live in the communities where they work.

SB 184 would build upon the housing initiative passed last session through the Welcome Home Ohio Program, which has been instrumental in helping increase the supply of affordable single-family homes for income-eligible Ohioans. In the last operating budget (HB 33), the legislature created this program to address the critical housing shortage facing the state. Although still in its infancy, the Welcome Home Ohio Program has helped more Ohioans achieve the dream of homeownership by awarding \$60 million for the construction of 440 homes throughout the state.

¹ [RCG: Housing is Critical Infrastructure: Social and Economic Benefits of Building More Housing](#)

Ohio REALTORS® believes that SB 184 is a forward-thinking and incentive-based solution to a housing gap that needs to be addressed. By incentivizing local communities that unlock housing potential, the Housing Accelerator Fund and REDDs would be game-changing for many areas of the state. We thank the sponsors for bringing this important bill forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Williams".

Scott Williams
Chief Executive Officer
Ohio REALTORS®