



Proponent Testimony for Ohio Senate Bill 184

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Chair Reynolds, Vice Chair Timken, Ranking Member Craig, and Members of the Ohio Senate Housing Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony in support of Senate Bill 184, a bill that would encourage housing development and appropriate density at a time when Ohioans need more housing options now more than ever.

Zillow was founded to bring transparency to the real estate market, empowering consumers with information and data. Whether a consumer is looking to buy, sell, rent, or finance their next home, we seek to provide them with the information they need to make smarter, more informed decisions in what is often the largest, most consequential financial transaction of their lives.

It is clear that Ohio remains a hot and highly competitive housing market in 2025, just as it has been for many years leading up to today. In fact, in 2024 Zillow analyzed the 50 largest U.S. metro areas for expected home value appreciation, new jobs per housing unit, and the speed at which homes are sold and found three Ohio cities (Columbus, Cincinnati, and Cleveland) on the top ten list¹. Although this is exciting and positive for Ohio, it illustrates the highly competitive market Ohio home shoppers experience. It also firmly underscores that more housing is needed to calm such a hot market and give *all* buyers an opportunity at the American Dream of homeownership.

According to Zillow's Home Value Index, the average home value in Ohio reached \$238,110 as of April 2025, representing a 4.7% increase over the past year². This steady appreciation is not an isolated trend. Over the past five years, Ohio's home prices have consistently risen, even as national markets have cooled from the double-digit surges of 2021 and 2022. In some communities, the pace is even more pronounced: for example, Cleveland's average home value jumped 8.2% year-over-year as of February 2025, while cities like Dayton and Toledo saw increases of 6.3% and 6.2%, respectively³. Looking at other parts of the state, Mentor's average home value jumped to \$277,627, up 5.6% in the past year and went from for-sale to pending in just 7 days. Columbiana's home value is around \$238,709, up 4.5% from last year.

¹ <https://www.zillow.com/learn/hottest-housing-markets-2024/>

² <https://www.zillow.com/home-values/821563/far-east-columbus-oh/>

³ <https://www.hondros.com/resources/blog/spring-2025-housing-market-trends-predictions/>

Senate Bill 184 would create residential economic development districts to promote housing in certain high-priority areas of the state. Local governments would be empowered to use these tools for residential development, ensuring housing is built in the areas of need. What is most important in this legislation are the incentives to support and encourage more housing density.

There is no “silver bullet” to solve the housing needs of Ohio’s communities, but more density is a major part of the solution. It is often a misnomer that constituents are anti-density. In a 2022 Zillow study, we found there is broad support for increased housing density in residential neighborhoods⁴. More than 73% of those surveyed across 26 markets, voiced support for at least one “modest densification” option; 69% support accessory dwelling units, and 61% support duplexes and triplexes. Residents and local governments simply want to be a part of the conversation, and SB 184 would allow just that.

Zillow’s data confirms that Ohio is-and will remain-a hot housing market in 2025. Home values are rising, homes sell quickly, and demand continues to outpace supply in many areas. With that said, many homebuyers will be left on the sidelines, especially middle-income and first-time homebuyers as the market is highly competitive. The positive news is that the passage of SB 184, a thoughtful piece of legislation to encourage and incentivize housing development and modest density, will provide Ohio’s residents a better opportunity to achieve the dream of homeownership.

We appreciate Chair Reynolds for bringing this legislation forward, and her continued commitment to finding solutions to Ohio’s growing housing needs. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written proponent testimony and respectfully encourage the committee to move this legislation forward.

⁴ <https://www.zillow.com/research/modest-densification-zhar-30934/>