

Senate Bill 192 Sponsor Testimony

State Senator Michele Reynolds

Chair Reynolds, Vice Chair Timken, Ranking Member Craig, and members of the Senate Housing Committee, Thank you for the opportunity to present sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 192.

This legislation declares the General Assembly's intent to support the development, repair, or upgrade of infrastructure needed to increase the supply of single-family homes in Ohio's rural counties.

As many of you know, one of the most significant barriers to housing growth in rural areas is the high cost of extending infrastructure—especially water and sewer lines. These costs often make it financially unfeasible for private developers to take on new housing projects in smaller communities. As a result, too many of our rural counties face a growing gap between the housing they need and the resources they have to attract that development.

Senate Bill 192 aims to address that challenge by targeting state support to counties most in need—those with populations of 75,000 or fewer and that have issued fewer than the average number of private housing permits statewide. By focusing on these counties—around 50 in total—we're ensuring that resources go where they are most likely to make a meaningful impact.

In addition, the bill ensures that any future funding will support single-family housing built on medium or smaller lots, no larger than one-quarter acre, and located in areas zoned for single-family residential use. This helps focus development on housing that is affordable and attractive to working families, first-time homebuyers, and middle-income residents.

Let me be clear—Senate Bill 192 does not appropriate funds or change existing law at this time. It is a policy marker, a conversation starter that invites collaboration with local governments, developers, and housing advocates. The goal is to begin shaping a more detailed and actionable solution to rural Ohio’s infrastructure and housing challenges.

This bill also complements broader state strategies, such as the development of Regional Economic Development Districts, by ensuring that the communities surrounding major investments are equipped with the housing infrastructure needed to support sustainable growth.

Colleagues, this is a practical, strategic step toward leveling the playing field for rural communities. It says clearly: Ohio’s rural counties matter, and their ability to grow and thrive is essential to our state’s future.

I respectfully ask for your consideration and support of Senate Bill 192, and I welcome your input as we continue to refine this proposal with our partners.

Thank you, and I would be happy to answer any questions.