



**Senator Andrew O. Brenner – 19<sup>th</sup> District**  
**Senate Education Committee**  
**February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025**  
**Senate Bill 5 – Sponsor Testimony**

Thank you, Chair Manning, Vice Chair Reynolds, Ranking Member Hicks Hudson, and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, for this opportunity for myself and my joint sponsor, Senator Huffman to provide sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 5 this morning. The legislation before you was introduced in the previous General Assembly and has been reintroduced as it still needed to address the growing concern about squatters illegally entering homes and causing significant property damage across Ohio.

As you will hear from proponents of this bill, squatters taking over properties leads to many significant issues that Senator Huffman alluded to for property owners including property damage, financial losses, and complex legal battles to reclaim ownership. Squatters may cause physical damage to the property such as breaking doors and windows, stealing appliances or even fixtures, including electrical wiring. This leads to financial burdens for property owners who must pursue civil lawsuits or file insurance claims to recover these costs.

Ohio's laws complicate this removal process. This process requires formal eviction which can be timely and costly for an ownership. The 30-day eviction process often turns into legal cases that drag on for months in court. The longer a squatter is allowed to remain in a home, the more damage they can do. This bill, as Senator Huffman pointed out, seeks to address the various issues with what squatters can do by having a timely removal process for squatters.

In my district in Delaware County, after the death of a woman in 2021, squatters moved into her home where they defecated outside the home, created a trash strewn mess, and started a fire. Neighbors claimed that 20-30 were seen living

there in a two-year period. In Toledo, a homeowner had arranged for a dumpster and cleaning crew to clean up her trashed yard after squatters had taken over her home. The homeowner stated that the squatters were given 30-days' notice and made aware of the eviction several times. However, when the cleaning crew arrived, the squatters became violent, threatening to hurt the people coming to clean up their mess.

When people illegally reside in someone's home, it should not take months of expensive legal battles to right the wrong. That is why Senator Huffman and I have reintroduced Senate Bill 5 to give homeowners the tools they need to protect their properties from squatters in a timely manner. We welcome any questions.