



Senator Andrew O. Brenner – 19th District
Senate Local Government Committee
June 11th, 2025
Senate Bill 208 – Sponsor Testimony

Chair O'Brien, Vice-Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Smith, and members of the Senate Local Government Committee, thank you for affording Senator Reynolds and me the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 208, a reintroduction of Senate Bill 300 from the last general assembly. This bill would establish in a permissive manner local county Housing Trust Funds across the state of Ohio.

The last general assembly passed my Senate Bill 94. That bill was heavily amended in the House, but the original language provided funding to modernize records with county recorders. There was concern the bill would divert funds from the state housing trust fund, which it did not. However, concerns for the Housing Trust Fund have grown due to the fact that there was a decrease in the collection to the Housing Trust Fund from 2022-2024.

In this General Assembly, Senator Reynolds and I came together to sponsor Senate Bill 208. This legislation would create a local county trust fund in each county across the state for the purpose of funding low-income, disability, and transition housing as well as first-time homebuyers. Funds for each county would come from county conveyance fees, as the bill is currently written.

Senator Reynolds and I feel this legislation is needed to help combat the growing housing crisis Ohio continues to face. As you know, the Ohio Housing Trust Fund helps to provide to homeless shelters, supportive housing operations, repairs and modifications for low-income homeowners, and transition housing and rehabilitation. The creation of these County Trust Funds will continue to help provide crucial dollars to those who need them most and aid young people in taking the exciting step of purchasing a home for the first time.

As you may know, current Housing Trust Fund revenues have been stagnant, between \$45 million and \$52 million per year. So one of the thoughts of this bill is to find a mechanism to allow more funds to be utilized for housing issues in each county. One way to bridge that gap is to use local conveyance fees. Many counties have not utilized all their conveyance fees permitted under the law. The maximum amount is \$4 per \$1000. Conveyance fees are charged every time an eligible, non-exempt property transfers.

As an example, a \$400,000 house would generate \$400 for the local housing trust fund if \$1 of the conveyance fee were set aside for the local fund. To illustrate how a conveyance would work, let me use an example Delaware County. Right now, Delaware County uses all 4 of conveyance fees. They could opt to move some of these conveyance fees to cover local housing trust funds. In 2024, Delaware County collected \$1,027,348 in conveyance fees for the state Housing Trust fund. If one dollar of the conveyance fees used to collect these dollars was sent to a local fund, that would amount to \$256,837 dollars in 2024 alone to be used locally.

Chair O'Brien, Vice-Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Smith, and members of the Senate Local Government Committee, it is my hope that this bill will help to provide funding for housing to those who need it most. Thank you again for hearing my testimony on this important issue. I would be happy to answer any questions the Committee members may have.