

HOME MATTERS TO OHIO

June 14, 2017

Senate Building
1 Capitol Square, 1st Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Chairman Oelslager, Vice Chair Manning & Ranking Member Skindell:

On behalf of the Home Matters to Ohio Coalition, we urge you to restore the Ohio Housing Trust Fund amendment that was removed from the biennial budget in the substitute bill that the Senate adopted this week.

The Home Matters to Ohio Coalition formed over a year ago with the common understanding that decent, affordable housing is the foundation for self-sufficiency, improved health outcomes, vitality in distressed communities, and economic growth. Today, over 250 organizations and companies throughout the state have joined the coalition to support expansion of the Housing Trust Fund.

The Trust Fund is the state's primary and most significant resource for homelessness and decent, affordable homes for seniors, veterans, children and Ohioans with disabilities. The Trust Fund not only provides funding to help these families access opportunity, but also leverages private funds and stimulates economic activity. For every dollar spent by the Trust Fund over \$11.50 of economic output is generated.

Recognizing the importance of the Trust Fund to both Ohio's economy and its most vulnerable citizens, House leaders included an amendment to the budget that would stabilize and expand the Trust Fund. The amendment also represents a key part of the solution to Ohio's opiate crisis because it dedicates \$6 million per year in non-GRF funding to expand housing options for low-income people exiting addiction treatment programs. As we all know, safe, decent, affordable, drug-free homes are a crucial element for addressing this rapidly growing epidemic.

The Trust Fund amendment also establishes predictable recording fees to restore dwindling revenue to both the Trust Fund and county governments. The predictable fee structure converts the current archaic, per-page recording fee charge to a uniform, set amount.

The Trust Fund amendment not only helps the most vulnerable among us, but it is a good investment. When we invest in homes, we avoid the costs that homelessness imposes on our healthcare system, our schools, child welfare agencies, courts and jails. Safe, decent, affordable housing provides the foundation for Ohio to build on education and job training skills, increase employment opportunities that lead to enhanced financial well-being and independence, and achieve better health outcomes across the board.

We respectfully request your support for reinserting the Ohio Housing Trust Fund amendment that was removed from House Bill 49.

Sincerely,

Home Matters to Ohio Coalition

Coalition on Homelessness & Housing in Ohio
Enterprise Community Partners
Finance Fund
Habitat for Humanity of Ohio
Homeport

National Church Residences
NeighborWorks Collaborative of Ohio
Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing
Ohio CDC Association
WSOS Community Action

Attachment: Home Matters to Ohio Supporters