



**Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee
Written Proponent Testimony for Senate Bill 193
May 16, 2022**

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Chair McColley, Vice Chair Schuring, Ranking Member Williams and members of the Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee, we appreciate the opportunity to provide written proponent testimony in support of Senate Bill 193.

Formed in 1910, Ohio REALTORS is the state's largest professional trade organization with more than 36,000 members representing both residential and commercial practitioners, as well as auctioneers and appraisers. We also represent homeowners, homebuyers, investors and support policies to protect private property rights.

Senate Bill 193 introduced by Senator Sandra Williams will prohibit a political subdivision from placing a lien on a property for unpaid water charges and we appreciate her work on this issue.

This has long been a conversation across Ohio, and in particular in Northeast Ohio and Central Ohio. REALTOR members have experienced issues with water liens, often in rental units where a tenant does not report an issue with their water service, resulting in increased water charges that can sometimes turn into a lien on the property. Or the tenant does not pay the water bill and vacates the property, leaving the property owner responsible for a hefty water bill. An aging homeowner also may be unaware of significant water charges, and only discover the issue after a lien is placed on their property.

A water lien can also cause disruptions in the sale of a home if the lien is discovered late in the process. Also, if a home is transferred with a lien on the property from unpaid water charges, and is missed in the title search, the new owner could find themselves with a lien to pay.

Ohio REALTORS asserts that liens are important tools to be used only when absolutely necessary. However, we believe Senate Bill 193 provides appropriate balance to give a property owner the time to understand the charges, and pay them back as they are able without having a lien placed on the property which can lead to other issues, and even foreclosure of that property.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written proponent testimony and we respectfully ask the members of this committee to support Senate Bill 193.