OHIO REAL ESTATE INVESTORS ASSOCIATION

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

TO SUPPORT GOOD GOVERNMENT THAT IMPACTS THE PROFESSIONAL INVESTMENT PROPERTY INDUSTRY AT STATE AND LOCAL LEVELS.

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**Dan Acton**

**Senate Bill 1 Proponent Testimony**

**Senate Judiciary Committee**

**February 28, 2017**

Chairman Bacon, Vice Chairman Dolan, Ranking Member Thomas and members of the committee, my name is Dan Acton and I am the Government Affairs Director of the Ohio Real Estate Investors Association (OREIA). OREIA represents 12 local chapters across Ohio whose membership consists of the smaller real estate investors and housing providers who typically own single family housing units. My background has been more than 30 years in the property management and ownership industry. I am providing a brief statement on Senate Bill 1.

Last session former Senator Seitz amended this bill to strengthen the mens rea standard to make it very clear that landlords and other property owners could not be charged with permitting drug abuse unless they knowingly allowed it to happen. OREIA is very supportive of this language in the bill. Landlords are in a very precarious position oftentimes as it relates to tenant activities. We have a legal duty to respect the privacy of the tenants and cannot and should not monitor their every movement; however, our members do maintain a level of due diligence by talking with neighbors and working with law enforcement, if necessary, to keep tabs on our investments. Drugs are a scourge on our society and landlords are unfortunately many times on the front lines of this problem. Methamphetamine is a particularly troublesome issue as there are significant cleanup costs associated with the manufacture of this drug. We have been working with Senators La Rose and Beagle on solutions to that issue. As it relates to the manufacturing of meth, a landlord would have a difficult time knowing if a tenant assembled a large amount of cold medicine, a requisite ingredient of the drug, in their possession. Also with regard to criminal activity and monitoring of our properties, OREIA is evaluating a HUD guideline that prohibits landlords from not renting to persons with criminal records, thus, losing an important screening tool we have used to ensure that a tenant may not have a proclivity to participate in some of the activities sought to be prohibited in the bill.

Again, thank you to Senator LaRose and members of this committee for working to protect property investors who may be caught up in the criminal activities of their tenants.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input.