



**Before the
HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**Proponent Written Testimony
House Bill 167**

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Chairman Oelslager, Vice Chair Plummer, Ranking Member Crawley, and members of the House Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to support House Bill 167, which would further assist individuals, families, and communities impacted by the pandemic to remain in secure and affordable housing.

The Ohio Credit Union League is the state trade association representing the collective interests of Ohio's 247 federal and state-chartered credit unions and their more than three million members. With the "people helping people" philosophy at the heart of member-owned financial cooperatives, promoting economic mobility and financial well-being remains a credit union priority.

House Bill 167 would provide necessary additional rent and utility assistance to further prevent eviction, delinquency, and lack of vital services. Throughout 2020, in early 2021, and looking ahead, Ohio credit unions continue to lift people and families struggling to make ends meet through payment forbearance and other flexible service options. More recently, to further assist Ohio credit unions in extending additional lifelines to communities adversely impacted by the pandemic, the Ohio Credit Union League supported efforts to unlock previous state-issued, federal Coronavirus-related relief funding through community action agencies to directly infuse Ohioans with the financial assistance necessary to meet challenged rent and utility obligations.

However, the first round of federal and state housing and utility assistance was simply not enough to meet the need, and further housing relief is warranted and anticipated in the months ahead. House Bill 167 will provide a necessary infusion of supplemental Coronavirus funding to further support more people at this time. As the current economic challenges compound the ongoing difficulties many Ohioans experience while making ends meet, no one should lose access to safe and secure shelter and vital utility services.

We would like to thank Chairman Oelslager for his leadership in preserving a safe and affordable housing and utility safety net for so many Ohioans. Through prosperous times and bad, Ohio's credit unions are committed to helping hardworking people remain in affordable housing so they can pursue the American Dream in a stable, safe, secure, and fair way.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony. I am happy to provide additional information or field questions in support of the Committee's work.