

House Government Oversight Committee

H. B. 499 – Proponent Testimony

May 20, 2024

Chair Peterson, Vice Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Humphrey, and members of the House Government Oversight Committee, thank you for allowing the Cincinnati Regional Chamber the opportunity to express our SUPPORT for Ohio House Bill 499.

Like the rest of Ohio, the Cincinnati region is facing a housing shortage. Currently, there are not enough options for residents to buy or rent in our community. As a state, we need zoning changes to alleviate the complicated and unnecessary restrictions around development that have contributed to rising housing costs.

Representative Isaacsohn and Representative Matthews have brought forward an important piece of legislation that will be instrumental for housing production across the entire state, and particularly the Cincinnati region. This bill incentivizes pro-housing policies and encourages investment from municipalities and townships to provide quality housing options for residents at all price points.

The production of housing and job growth are intrinsically linked. Ohio has landed unprecedented investment over the past couple of years with Medpace, Intel, and Honda choosing to relocate or expand their footprints in the state, bringing thousands of jobs with them. HB 499 is key to having local governments utilize state funding to boost homeownership, site readiness, and support multifamily development in the current and future housing landscape.

Understanding that Ohio features unique localities across the state, HB 499 is not a one-size-fits-all approach. This bill will change how local governments can address housing issues in their region, by allowing them to choose which pro-housing policies they wish to adopt. These reforms can range from eliminating parking minimums, to allowing for more missing middle housing, to increasing efficiencies and reducing timelines of the permitting processes. Providing municipalities and townships support for surrounding infrastructure and resources from the state to help make housing projects financially feasible will increase opportunities for all Ohioans and allow for a more proactive strategy to address housing demand. At the local level, the Chamber has been advocating for these types of policy solutions.

The Cincinnati Regional Chamber strongly supports House Bill 499 as it provides the state with an incredible opportunity to partner with local governments across Ohio to make needed reforms addressing housing supply. We appreciate your consideration of this important legislation.

Sincerely,



Will Gerhardt

Manager, Government Affairs