



April 2, 2024

Chair Marilyn John
77 South High Street
13th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

RE: Letter of Support for House Bill 315

Chair John:

On behalf of the Ohio History Connection, we would like to offer our support for House Bill 315. This legislation revises many aspects of township law, but in particular, we would like to offer our support for language that would allow for the creation of township preservation commissions.

For background, the Ohio History Connection, formerly the Ohio Historical Society, is a statewide history organization with the mission to spark discovery of Ohio's stories, to embrace the present, share the past, and transform the future. As a nonprofit organization chartered in 1885, the Ohio History Connection carries out history services for Ohio and its citizens focused on preserving and sharing the state's history. This includes housing the State Historic Preservation Office, the official state archives, educational and community outreach and managing more than 50 sites and museums across Ohio.

The concept proposed in HB 315 to create township preservation commissions is something that we support. Similar commissions at the city level have been very successful in restoring and preserving historic structures and a commission at a township level will likely be able to do the same. However, there are portions of this proposal that may need to be clarified. For example, how will this proposal interact with current zoning laws? Additionally, there may need to be more clarification with how these commissions are actually able to preserve archaeological sites.

Overall, we are supportive of this proposal and believe it would go a long way in helping preserve and restore historic structures throughout Ohio townships. We would like to thank State Representative Bill Seitz and State Representative Thomas Hall for bringing the creation of

township preservation commissions contained within HB 315 forward and we urge the committee to support this proposal.

If you have any questions regarding our support, please feel free to e-mail me at kboehner@ohiohistory.org or by phone at 614-297-2355.

Sincerely,

Kevin Boehner
Director of Government Relations
Ohio History Connection