State Representative Juanita Brent
22nd House District

Sponsor Testimony - House Bill 277

Chair Roemer, Vice Chair Lorenz, Ranking Member Troy, and the members of the Ways and Means Committee. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify today in support of House Bill 277 the Pet-Friendly Rental Act.

The Pet-Friendly Rental Act is meant to increase the number of rental properties available to Ohioans with companion animals without nonrefundable fees or additional rent forced on them. HB277 will address the needs of the growing renting population, by ensuring that their companion animals do not become a barrier to them finding adequate housing.

The prohibition of rent control or stabilization across Ohio (**enacted in HB430 134th GA**) has only furthered the desperate position that renters are in. This is already seen Statewide as the average rent in Ohio has increased by almost 50%.

Within my own district, I have 2 of the highest percentages of renters in Ohio at 68.1 and 62.2 percent in East Cleveland and Warrensville Heights respectively. The Pet-Friendly Rental Act can alleviate one of the additional costs of being a renter.

34% of Ohioans are currently renters and that percentage is projected to increase. Families and their pets should not have to suffer from unneeded restrictions to find a home. Animal companions are essential to the mental health and well-being of families and communities throughout Ohio. This bill will make sure that Ohioans and the pets that they love are seen.

This bill does not force any landlords to allow pets. This bill incentivizes landlords to utilize pet-friendly policies to qualify for a tax credit. Eligible property owners would receive $750 per pet-friendly unit up to a maximum credit of $7,500.

The Pet Friendly Rental Act is a commonsense bill that makes sure anyone with a pet can find a home. I respectfully ask for this Committee to support House Bill 277. I am willing to address any questions you may have. Thank you.