



House Finance Committee

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Chairman Stewart, Vice Chair Dovilla, Ranking Member Sweeney, and members of the House Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on the biennial budget (House Bill 96). Specifically, we are focused on housing across the state. A stable, decent, and affordable housing is the foundation for the well-being for all Ohio families, whether they live in urban, suburban, or rural areas.

Enterprise is a national nonprofit whose mission is to make home and community places of pride, power and belonging for all. To make that possible, we operate the only organization designed to address America's affordable housing crisis from every angle: we develop and deploy programs and support community organizations on the ground; we advocate for policy on a nonpartisan basis at every level of government; we invest capital to build and preserve rental homes people can afford; and we own, operate, and provide resident services for affordable communities. With this end-to-end approach, 40 years of experience and thousands of local partners, Enterprise has built and preserved 1 million affordable homes and invested \$80.90 billion in homes and communities across the country.

Enterprise has joined advocacy and business groups to create the Home Matters to Ohio platform that outlines several realistic and achievable policies to address the affordable housing crisis. We are proud to be working alongside coalition partners like the Ohio Chamber of Commerce, Habitat for Humanity of Ohio, COHHIO, and the Ohio Housing Council.

A significant proposal in the Home Matters policy recommendations is to stabilize the Ohio Housing Trust Fund (OHTF), the primary source of state funding for local homelessness and affordable housing initiatives. The OHTF is funded by the Housing Trust Fund Fee, which mirrors county fees for recording deeds, mortgages, and other documents.

This funding helps provide opportunities for those facing homelessness and it is a critical funding source for the development of new housing, home repair and rehabilitation. However, HB 96 proposes to remove the requirement that the fees collected by county recorders be deposited into the OHTF. This removal would have a detrimental effect on communities across the state.

Enterprise joins the Home Matters to Ohio coalition in asking the General Assembly to protect the OHTF — a critical source of funding for affordable housing, home repair, and homeless services.