



**State Representative Lou Terhar  
Ohio House District 30**

**House Bill 408  
Sponsor Testimony**

Chairman Adams, Vice Chair Ruhl, Ranking Member Goyal, and members of the House Financial Institutions, Housing and Urban Development Committee thank you for allowing me to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 408

All of us in this room come from different parts of Ohio, and each of our home area's face unique and difficult problems. House Bill 408 is only applicable to Hamilton County, my home county, and addresses recent changes that have occurred within the Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority activity.

Section 3735.27 of the Ohio Revised Code authorizes that if there is a need for a housing authority in any portion of any county that compromises two or more political subdivisions but is less than all the territory within the county. While the state grants this authority to local political subdivisions, approximately 90% of their funding comes from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD). As with any federally funded program, HUD will provide funding assistance to the CMHA only on the condition that they can have complete control over the agenda, even if it is in contrast to the views held by the citizens that are directly impacted by their decisions.

What we have seen in the greater Cincinnati area, is that more subsidized housing has been moved into the townships and municipalities outside the city of Cincinnati, yet the elected township

and municipal officials do not have adequate representation on the CMHA Board. Senator Seitz, who has introduced companion legislation in the Senate, and myself view this situation as a challenge to the democratic principle that all citizens should have a vehicle available to them to have their voice heard, and have thus proposed the following....

Currently, the five CMHA Board members are appointed as follows: 2 by the Cincinnati City Manager, 1 by the County Commissioners, 1 by the Probate Court Judge, and 1 by the Presiding Judge of the Court of Common Pleas. The only change to that system in my proposed legislation is that the 2 additional members now appointed by the City Manager instead will be appointed by the Mayor (our former colleague Mark Mallory) with approval of City Council.

My proposed legislation would also add two more members to the CMHA Board. One of these members shall be nominated by the Township Association of the county, and the Board of County Commissioners shall accept or reject the nomination. The other member shall be nominated by the Municipal League of the county, but shall not be a resident of the district's most populous city, and shall represent a city that is substantially impacted, and nominee must also to be accepted or rejected by the Board of County Commissioners.

Lastly, this legislation defines "substantially impacted" as it applies to the nomination for an MHA board member by the Municipal League of the county. It is defined as a city within a metropolitan housing authority that, based on the percentage of housing units that are subsidized housing, is in the top one-third of such cities within the county.

This legislation will only affect the Cincinnati MHA; different methodology specified in Code to appoint MHA members in other parts of Ohio will be untouched. This is in line with the principle that the best government results when that government is closest to the people it affects. House Bill 408 is supported by members of the CMHA Board,

and the Green Township Trustees. It will result in a Metropolitan Housing Board that more nearly reflects the diversity of Hamilton County and provide for townships, smaller cities, and villages representation of the Board.

I am for regionalism when it comes to governing, but I do not support one political subdivision having a disproportionate representation on a regional Board. As the population shifts in Hamilton County and the housing situation adjusts, it is imperative that all parties have their voices heard on the CMHA Board. Further elected officials, not political appointees, must be held accountable for their political appointments.

Thank you again for allowing me to come testify before you. I also want to thank Senator Seitz for all of his hard work, and to all the local officials in Hamilton County who have provided invaluable expertise on the issue.

I am happy to answer any questions you may have.