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CONTACT: Bill Faith, billfaith@cohhio.org, 614-579-6108

Marcus Roth, marcusroth@cohhio.org, 614-257-9848

Housing Advocates Blast Plan to Speed Up Evictions in Ohio

Weeks before lawmakers' winter recess, an Ohio House committee advanced legislation Wednesday to allow landlords to initiate the eviction process on Christmas and other holidays.

"Passing House Bill 390 during lame duck session is just unnecessary and petty," said Bill Faith, executive director of the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio. "We're calling on House and Senate leaders to put the brakes on and let this bad bill remain just a bad idea."

House Bill 390, which was voted out of the House Financial Institutions, Housing and Urban Development Committee on party lines, would speed up the eviction process by counting weekends and holidays as part of the three-day period tenants have to avoid an eviction after receiving an official notice. Courts have ruled overwhelmingly that tenants at risk of losing their homes should have three full business days as a last chance to remedy their housing crises, whether it's finding a new apartment, moving in with friends or family, or getting help from a relative to pay back rent.

"Whether or not a tenant is actually evicted, the eviction filing goes on their record, making it very difficult to rent from potential landlords in the future. Evicted families often wind up in worse circumstances and are at serious risk of homelessness," Faith said. "Our leaders should recognize that families and communities are stronger when residents have safe, secure, affordable housing and a fair process when an eviction is not preventable."

While Statehouse politicians advanced a bill to accelerate eviction, local leaders around the state are considering ways to prevent unnecessary evictions. A [report issued earlier this week](#) showed that the Tenant Advocacy Project, which provides free legal counsel to Columbus tenants facing eviction, drastically reduces their chances of losing their homes.

"With nearly 400,000 Ohio households now spending more than half their income on rent, we urge the General Assembly not to do anything to exacerbate housing insecurity, as HB 390 would clearly do," Faith added.