

Michael Scarmack, Candidate,
State Legislature/OH-73
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Responses to Questions for state candidate Michael Scarmack

1. Homelessness

What should the state do to help end homelessness?

We should first and foremost recognize this people crisis is made of: “**A Human without A Home**” and conversely rely on an introspection that “**I have a home**”.

Resulting from this short, concise, contemplation a hundred possibilities will come to mind. Perhaps one of the following will surface:

Here are 11 possibilities on how I can help a person without a home:

- Accompany him or her to shelters, job interviews, or medical appointments.
- Assist him or her find payable work, linking it to a livable wage.
- Donate to shelters, food pantries, or programs.
- Educate awareness about homelessness in our community.
- Encourage others to help and advocate for societal change.
- Engage in advocacy for more affordable housing with local services.
- Listen to a human by considering his or her station with dignity & empathy.
- Map a route to a local shelter, food kitchen, or a housing specialist.
- Offer my time and skills to a human without home.
- Provide on demand basics like food, water, clothing, and hygiene items
- Support the expansion of mental health and substance abuse services.

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2. Housing Challenges in Rural Ohio

Although millions of Ohioans throughout the state have trouble paying their rent or mortgage, housing insecurity in rural areas is often overlooked. Resources for rural communities have decreased while housing issues have increased significantly.

How would you address the housing needs of our rural communities?

Conventional wisdom suggests that alleviating Ohio's rural housing challenges is as easy as providing loans for the purpose of building a house on often substandard, less than livable wages.

Many organizations have altruistic minds and hearts, yet may be absent of the sympathy of the depths of the plights of rural living.

Corporate farms, out of state landowners, dilapidating housing stock and the diminution of state funding to villages and townships over the past twenty years by a uninterested state political supermajority has led to abysmal living conditions for the poor about us.

To purchase, build, or rehabilitate homes in rural areas requires an infusion of reasonable funding structures provided directly to end users via land grants, instruments of monetary grants, and opportunities to earn wages to meet expenses needed to rent or own a home.

Innovation for truly affordable structures made of materials such as 3D-printed buildings, modular manufactured housing, and hemp made site built structures which are safe, fireproofed, and climate resilient are necessary.

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3. Ohio Housing Trust Fund (for state candidates only)

The Ohio Housing Trust Fund (OHTF) is the number one source of state funding for local affordable housing development and homelessness programs in the state. Each OHTF dollar generate over \$8 in economic activity. The OHTF has been historically funded through a 50-50 split with county recorders fees, but revenues have declined in recent years.

Do you believe the state should ensure sufficient revenue for the OHTF?

Yes.

If so, how?

Living in a rusting retired school bus with a coal burning potbelly stove keeping young children warm in the winter is just unacceptable condition in an enormously wealthy state. Proposed revenue increasing acts include making minds cleared of apathy by helping educate the affluent in all economic sectors. This allows pressures on legislators and administrators.

The state legislators of the Ohio General Assembly are morally obligated to dissolve bills for bailouts and end corporate welfare funding, thus changing contributions used for their own political gain and not directed to the common good.

Thus revisions to the funding distribution to The Ohio Housing Trust Fund retroactive to the budget passed in June 2024 can be adopted and made law, and continue in future state budgets.

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4. Additional Comments

Feel free to include any additional comments you may have about ways the state/federal government can reduce homelessness and/or expand access to affordable housing in Ohio.

As a registered architect attuned with construction costs in today's built environment, the term "affordable" begs for a definition.

- Prioritizing compassion over capitalism is the first step in defining expanded access.
- The will to assist humans without homes with more financial resources is the second step.
- Creative thinking of what and where and how to build or retrofit, and most importantly what materials are specified, in a fashion that incorporates social justice, is the third step.

Becoming an elected house representative provides a platform to initiate laws for these efforts to change regulations and financing throughout the state of Ohio from an Ohioan who cares ... for our Home and the homes ... for all Ohioans.

I appreciate this opportunity to respond to the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (www.ohhio.org) and allowing me to address each concern posed. I am always available to meet with the policy committee in conversation.

Thank you

Michael Scarmack, AIA

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