

Questions for state candidates

1. Homelessness

On any given night, nearly 11,000 Ohioans are experiencing homelessness—sleeping outside or in an emergency shelter or transitional housing program. **What should the state do to help end homelessness?**

To address homelessness, the legislature could prioritize increasing investment in affordable housing and expanding rental assistance programs to prevent evictions. Additionally, it would be crucial to expand access to supportive services, such as mental health care, addiction treatment, job training, and legal assistance, to help individuals maintain stable housing. Furthermore, fostering partnerships between the state, local governments, nonprofits, and the private sector can pool resources and enhance collaborative funding efforts to more effectively tackle homelessness

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?**

One way to address the housing needs of our rural communities to invest in affordable housing projects specifically for our rural areas. This could involve offering grants or low-interest loans to developers to build or renovate homes and expanding tax incentives for rural housing projects. Additionally, work on improving infrastructure like roads, utilities, and internet access in these areas could make them more appealing for new housing developments and to enhance the quality of existing homes.

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? If so, how?**

Yes, I believe the state should ensure sufficient revenue for the Ohio Housing Trust Fund (OHTF). To address the recent decline in revenues, the state could explore increasing the percentage of fees allocated to the OHTF, implement new funding sources, or enhance existing revenue streams. Additionally, legislative measures could be introduced to stabilize and grow the fund, ensuring that it effectively supports affordable housing and homelessness prevention efforts across Ohio.

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.