

Candidate Name: State Senator Stephanie Kunze

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? Stabilization of the OHTF by keeping it whole regardless of county recorder fee fluctuations is a start. SB245 is a key to this as well as keeping people housed. Not criminalizing homelessness is a piece of this puzzle, too. I would advocate for the return of TANF dollars for programming like the Siemer Foundation which I advocated for and supported in past budgets.**

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? Continue to support the Ohio Department of Development's HCRP and funding to Appalachian Community Grant programs that I have supported in past budgets.**

3. Ohio Housing Trust Fund

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, see answer #1**

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. **I am grateful for the advocacy of COHHIO throughout my tenure in the legislature and have seen first hand the importance of stable, affordable housing for Ohioans. Programming and funds for our mothers and babies, like Healthy Beginnings at Home which I advocated for are crucial to keeping Ohioans safe and thriving.**

