

Questions for Federal 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 federal government do to help end homelessness?**

Every person in Ohio's 13th Congressional District deserves to have a safe, secure, and affordable place to live. Unfortunately, a lack of affordable homes, historically high interest rates, and outdated zoning laws, and not enough housing supply have all caused the American Dream of homeownership to be out of reach for too many people in Northeast Ohio.

I introduced the Keep Affordable Housing in Forgotten Communities Act and the Stop Predatory Investing Act to do just that. I also serve as the Vice-Chair of the New Democrat Coalition Task Force on Affordable Housing, where we have put forth a comprehensive plan that includes suggestions on working with local governments to make changes to zoning laws, provide tax credits to developers to encourage building affordable housing and working with HUD to find more options for middle and low income families.

I am also proud to share that on September 26, 2024, my *Extension of Department of Veterans Affairs Expiring Authorities Act of 2024* was signed into law as part of the temporary funding bill that will keep the government funded through December 20. This was my first bill to become law.

Veterans who have sacrificed for our country should never have to worry about a lapse in the benefits they rightfully earned. This legislation reauthorizes several key veteran programs and services. It includes provisions to provide nursing home care for elderly and disabled veterans, support homeless veterans and prevent veterans and their families from falling into homelessness, improve access to mental health care, and allow burial benefits.

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?**

Not having enough housing supply is a major contributor to the high cost of living all over the country including the rural community. This means partnering with the private sector to provide tax incentives to develop in rural and underserved communities. However, a role that I can play is as a member of the Transportation and Infrastructure committee. Infrastructure can help lure housing development and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law has appropriated billions of dollars for roads, water infrastructure including water lines and sewer connections, and affordable high speed internet. These

infrastructure projects can help encourage home building in rural areas that can in turn increase the housing supply issue that plagues rural communities.

3. Housing as Safety Net

Unlike Social Security and Medicare, federal housing assistance is not guaranteed, even if a family qualifies for the program. Today, fewer than one in four eligible households receive the assistance they need. **Are there existing housing programs that you would want to expand? If so, what specifically will you do to expand access to this assistance?**

In March 2023, I signed a letter supporting the Housing Choice Vouchers program, also known as Tenant-Based Rental Assistance, in the FY2024 Transportation-Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Bill. Specifically, I requested that the Committee provide at least \$33.713 billion to renew all vouchers currently in use, provide additional tenant protection vouchers, increase administrative funds for public housing authorities (PHAs), and create 200,000 new housing vouchers in a first step towards making vouchers available to all eligible households. Rental assistance is critical to helping families cope with rapidly rising rent and utility costs, reducing homelessness, improving outcomes for children and families, and lifting people out of poverty.

Continued funding to the Federal Housing Administration and its loan programs are essential to increasing home ownership for all Americans nationwide. Over the last 90 years, more than 91 million of the nation's low- and moderate-income and first-time homebuyers have benefitted from FHA's affordable mortgage financing and more than seven million American households currently live in a home financed by an FHA-insured mortgage. During the Biden-Harris Administration alone, FHA has served more than 2.9 million homebuyers, the vast majority of whom were buying a home for the first time, while also financing the rental homes of more than half a million individuals and families. FHA loans are an invaluable tool to ensuring low and moderate income Americans are able to build generational wealth and achieve the American Dream, while also expanding home ownership to people of color and others who have not been provided with fair access to homeownership in the past.

3. 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'm looking for bipartisan support for a bill that will disincentivize private equity companies from coming into communities and paying cash offers to buy up all the housing stock in communities.

The housing crisis and the issues with the supply chain disruption have not caught up with demand, and when that balance is out of whack - costs go up. Tax credits need to be championed, highlighted, and made more accessible to communities across the country, especially right here in Ohio.

As Vice-Chair of the New Democrat Coalition Taskforce on Affordable Housing, I am working to protect everyday Americans and the working class from being priced out of

their homes by deep-pocketed private equity preventing younger generations from building communities and building homes.