

Written Testimony of
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On behalf of the Ohio Township Association (OTA), I am writing to offer our support for Senate Bill 90, which permits local governments to exempt homes that have been vacant for at least twelve months from property taxation for up to three years when purchased by an owner-occupant, pending before the Senate Ways & Means Committee.

With the downturn in the economy, the number of abandoned and vacant homes is on the rise. It is often the case that the local governments are stuck providing the outside maintenance on these homes with the cost to provide such services charged to the tax duplicate. Townships, just like municipalities, are seeking creative ways to help revitalize communities and encourage home ownership in blighted areas. Senate Bill 90 provides townships with an incentive tool to do just that.

Senate Bill 90 is permissive in nature and the OTA is generally supportive of permissive legislation. A township *may* exempt property taxes if they so choose but would not be required to do so. The board of trustees in each township would make the decision that is best for their community.

The OTA appreciates that this bill would not give any other jurisdiction the right to exempt township property taxes. The single largest source of revenue for townships comes from real property taxes. Unlike cities that have the income tax and counties that have the sales tax, townships may only levy the property tax.

The Ohio Township Association supports SB 90 and we look forward to working with you to pass this measure. Should you have any questions or concerns or would like to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact me.