



2100 Stella Court
Columbus, Ohio 43215
Phone: (614) 252-8417
Fax: (380) 235-8254
www.OCCAONLINE.org

Linda Janes, President
Lusanne Green, Executive Director

Alvis - Columbus, Dayton,
Chillicothe

Community Assessment & Treatment
Services, Inc. - Cleveland

Community Corrections Association, Inc -
Youngstown

Community Correctional Center,
Talbert House -Lebanon

Community Restoration Centers of Stark
County, Inc. - Canton

Community Transition Center - Lancaster

CROSSWAEH CBCF, Oriana House, Inc. -
Tiffin

Judge Nancy R. McDonnell CBCF,
Oriana House, Inc. - Cleveland

Mahoning County CBCF, Community
Corrections Association, Inc. -
Youngstown

Ohio Link Corrections & Treatment, Inc. -
Lima & Toledo

Oriana House, Inc. - Akron, Cleveland,
Marietta, Sandusky

Summit County CBCF Oriana House, Inc. -
Akron

Talbert House - Cincinnati

The Salvation Army Harbor Light -
Cleveland

Turtle Creek, Talbert House - Lebanon

Volunteers of America Ohio & Indiana -
Cincinnati, Dayton, Mansfield, Toledo

Chair Reynolds, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Craig, and members of the Senate Select Committee on Housing:

My name is Linda Janes and I am the Chief Operating Officer of Alvis, a non-profit human services agency with facilities in Chillicothe, Columbus, Lima, and Toledo. I have almost 38 years of experience in corrections, and I am currently the President of the Ohio Community Corrections Association (OCCA) which is comprised of 38 nonprofit, residential reentry treatment facilities across the state serving all 88 counties.

The Ohio Community Corrections Association is committed to helping people with criminal legal histories successfully reenter their neighborhoods as productive citizens. Ohio community correctional programs, including halfway houses, community based correctional facilities (CBCFs), and Community Corrections Act programs are good stewards of public resources. Within our membership, we represent non-profit CBCFs and Halfway Houses.

Housing is a foundation of successful reentry. Unfortunately, housing instability is one of the biggest challenges individuals face after a period of incarceration. That challenge is magnified depending on whether the individual was convicted for certain crimes.

RECOVERY HOUSING

Our reentry population has behavioral health needs more prevalent than the general community. Many individuals who reside in our facilities have substance use disorders, mental illness and some have dual diagnoses for both. In addition to cognitive behavioral treatment, our members may also offer recovery housing.

Recovery housing is **temporary**. It is not meant to be a permanent solution. We aim to assist clients in using community resources to secure permanent housing, employment, and financial stability.

ATTEMPTS TO OBTAIN HOUSING POST RELEASE

*[A]mong the 5 million formerly incarcerated people living in the United States... formerly incarcerated people are **almost 10 times more likely to be homeless than the general public.***¹

Persons with a history of criminal legal involvement are far more likely to be denied housing than someone else. There are both mandatory and discretionary Housing and Urban Development (HUD) restrictions enforced by local housing authorities that bar admission to persons convicted of arson and drug crimes, there are zoning restrictions against people convicted of sexual offending, and there are even well-intentioned persons who suggest that a facility for people who have no other options should be constructed but "Not In My Back Yard."

Some semi-permanent and permanent housing options that include shared living provide for several adults who may not be related to rent a home and share the cost of the overall rent. There are limits on how many non-relative persons may cohabitate. Neighbors could stigmatize this relationship and lobby their local elected officials to evict the tenants.

Your committee received extensive testimony on the very expensive rents and cost to build here in Ohio, unless someone leaves prison with an exceptional credit score, stellar references, making a competitive wage and a savings for first and last month's rent it becomes even more challenging to secure a safe

home. One of the most concerning issues for people leaving prisons and even residential community corrections is finding safe, permanent, and affordable housing where a person may begin anew and raise their children.

On any given night in this country, 550,000 people are homeless and a significant number have been previously incarcerated. Moreover, finding a job without an address is almost impossible!

FINDING AFFORDABLE HOUSING IS A STRUGGLE FOR OUR WORKFORCE

The affordable housing crisis also affects our line staff who earn the lowest wages in our facilities. Often, our staff come from the same neighborhoods as the people we supervise in our residential facilities. Did you know that where a person resides can influence their life expectancy, quality of life, financial trajectory, and even their likelihood of being incarcerated?

“Your zip code is a better predictor of your health than your genetic code.” Poor housing opportunities and the environment that children grow up in have far-reaching health and social implications. “[A] residential zip code—where a child grows up—is more predictive of social mobility and economic fate than any other national metric.

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

- Mixed use housing where persons of myriad social economic strata share a living environment have had positive effects.
- Supportive housing where recovery and other resources are wrapped around a tenant with varying needs also has shown positive outcomes.
- Master leases where a landlord deals with an intermediary who is ultimately responsible for tenants and property reduces stigma and ensures certain rent for the landlord.
- Finally, programs that work toward homeownership assistance in leveraging lower mortgage rates and downpayment assistance show promise.

Thank you for your time today. I am happy to answer any questions. Kindly forward any additional queries to:

Kelsey Woolard
Lobbyist, Governmental Policy Group
(614) 461-9335

Lusanne Green
Executive Director, OCCA
(614) 252-8417 x 357

1. “Nowhere to Go: Homelessness Among Formerly Incarcerated People” (Northampton, MA: Prison Policy Initiative, 2018), <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/housing.html>.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/healthequity/racism-disparities/index.html> (Last visited Mar. 18, 2022). See also ABC Action News. <https://www.abcactionnews.com/news/national/mapincome-race-inequality-opportunity-atlas>.
3. Harvard. <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/news/features/zip-code-better-predictor-of-health-than-genetic-code/> (Last visited Mar. 18, 2022). Researcher and Harvard graduate Melody Goodman studies health disparities in urban areas
4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/healthequity/racism-disparities/index.html> (Last visited Mar. 18, 2022).
5. Claremont McKenna College. <https://www.cmc.edu/news/power-of-zip-code> (Last visited Mar. 18, 2022).