

## KEEPING OUR MEMBERS INFORMED

October 8 , 2009

**Problematic Legislation**

**House Bill 167 The Domestic Violence Victims** No sane person would oppose a bill to stop the causes or remedy the effects of domestic violence. House Bill 167 does not do either of those things. This bill is being pushed through the house by the Chairman of the **House Housing & Urban Revitalization Committee, Rep. Mike Foley**. Chairman Foley is a Cleveland attorney that has spent his professional career representing tenant causes. He has moved this bill onto the House floor for the Democratically controlled House.

This bill moves the responsibilities of caring for domestic violence victims from the courts, law enforcement and social agencies to the victim's landlords and employers. If this bill is passed into law, it would require Housing Providers to allow the victims out of their leases, would require landlords to change the locks on the rental units at the request of the victim's social workers and make victims a member of a newly created Protected Class under Fair Housing laws. That would mean that you could NOT refuse to rent to that applicant who could bring a violent past into your rental unit. This bill puts into place penalties against the landlord for failure to rent to, or for not returning deposits to these victims. OREIA through its testimony and its legislative efforts have been able to tone down the harsh points of the original bill.

**HB 201 BED BUG AWARENESS** (MALLORY, D) To establish the Bed Bug Awareness, Education, and Prevention Program, require boards of health to adopt vermin control policies under which bedbug infestations are treated in the same manner as other infestations, and to make an appropriation. There is a bill in the State Senate dealing with Bed Bugs too. Bed Bugs are being brought into the state from the south, but they represent a massive problem to property owners. Currently, there is NO Ohio EPA approved insecticide to combat this tiny bugs. Both proposed bills would require the landlord to be responsible for the costs of eliminating the problem and not renting the unit until the problem is cured. Bed bugs do not carry health problems, but they bite with a vicious ferocity.

**A Successful OREIA Day at the Capitol**

The OREIA Legislative Committee hosted the Day at the Capitol educational workshop on September 29th at the capitol square in Columbus. The event packed day full of guest speakers highlighted by insightful presentations by Chairman **Mike Foley**, Chair of the House Housing Committee, House Speaker Pro Tempore Rep. **Matt Szollosi** (D-Oregon). We also heard from Governmental Policy Group's Brooke Chaney and Matt Whitehouse telling us how they help our association combat bad legislation.

GPG is OREIA lobbying arm and allows OREIA to have a daily presence on Capitol Hill. Members of the Legislative Committee gave presentations about the difference between OREIA's Legislative efforts and the OREIA PAC, how contributions are used, and why tracking legislation in the General Assembly is so important to change the language of offensive legislation.

The group of local REIA leaders toured the State Capitol and witness a session of the Ohio Senate. Attendees were able to hand deliver messages on pending legislation to their State Senators while at the State House. By all accounts, OREIA's Day at the Capitol was a huge success and will be repeated next year with our new efforts to keep harmful bills from being enacted into crippling laws for our businesses.

**Contribute to the OREIA PAC.**  
**Your Contributions helps stop BAD BILLS from becoming BAD LAWS.**

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