



**House Bill 3: DataOhio Initiative  
Interested Party Testimony  
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Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Cera, members of the Finance Committee; thank you for the opportunity to offer interested party testimony for House Bill 3, better known as the DataOhio Initiative.

My name is Jason Warner and I am the Manager of Government Affairs of the Greater Ohio Policy Center. Greater Ohio is a nonprofit think tank that is valued for its data-driven research. Our mission is to champion revitalization and sustainable growth in Ohio to create economically competitive communities.

Greater Ohio believes that House Bill 3 (HB3) will move the needle in Ohio.

Greater Ohio's recent work has focused on innovative, cost effective ways local governments can provide services to their citizens. In particular, we have investigated strategies local governments can use to manage abandoned residential and commercial properties and opportunities for cost savings through shared roadway equipment, facilities and supplies. You might wonder why we are interested in blighted properties and road maintenance, two seemingly unrelated topics. Among other reasons, these place-based physical features of our communities are among the first attributes prospective and current businesses and residents see and experience. No matter how enticing the economic development incentives, our communities are handicapped if they appear unsafe, neglected, and unattractive.

With every penny spoken for in a local government's budget and many funding sources experiencing resource contraction, local governments are desperate to find underutilized dollars to learn of best practices for these high need areas.

We believe the DataOhio Initiative will provide the tools local governments and the state need to make data-driven, evidence based decisions. These decisions should help communities modernize procedures, maximize resources, attract jobs and businesses, and plan for sustainable, prosperous futures.

- The creation of a DataOhio Board ensures there is a face to the Initiative and a resource for participating entities.
- The requirement to use a uniform accounting standard allows communities, researchers, private citizens and funding sources to track performance over time. More importantly, a mechanism that creates apples to apples comparisons helps identify best practices and opportunities for government efficiencies and cost savings.
- By gathering and indexing the universe of data available in Ohio, HB 3 will enrich and strengthen research while also saving users time.
- Last, and perhaps most important, HB 3 assists communities in meeting these requirements. The cost savings and opportunities to share services or resources that will arise from a methodical understanding of our local governments will more than make up the foregone revenue of the Grant program.

To conclude, I and my colleagues at the Greater Ohio Policy Center believe the DataOhio Initiative holds great potential for the state. Systematizing information about our local governments and making this information easily accessible and readable is essential in today's global economy. To take the necessary steps that will ensure the long term sustainability, economic competitiveness, and physical attractiveness of our communities, decisions and development strategies must be data-driven and evidenced based. DataOhio will provide that crucial information.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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