



Ohio General Assembly
House of Representatives
Columbus

Sponsor Testimony of Representatives Laura Lanese Jonathan Dever
Regarding House Bill 441
Before the House Government Accountability and Oversight Committee
Tuesday, February 13, 2018

Chairman Blessing, Vice Chair Reineke, Ranking Member Clyde, and members of the House Government Accountability and Oversight Committee, thank you for allowing us the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 441, which allows state tax refunds to be issued on prepaid cards.

House Bill 441 is permissive legislation that modernizes our income tax refund system in Ohio, providing proven benefits for the state and taxpayers alike by allowing Ohio tax returns to be issued on prepaid debit cards.

If implemented, the state would see cost savings as refunds move away from expensive paper checks and toward less expensive prepaid card options. Ohio already uses prepaid cards to issue payments for workers' compensation benefits, SNAP benefits, and unemployment compensation benefits. HB 441 is a logical continuation of this trend.

Furthermore, the bill would benefit recipients of Ohio tax returns. Approximately 23% of Ohio's households are unbanked or under-banked. These families would greatly benefit from this bill. Currently they likely receive a paper check that they take to a location that charges check-cashing fees. This legislation will allow these individuals to receive their returns on prepaid cards that are able to be used directly with merchants, at ATMs, or on the internet for electronic purchases. Truly, we will be empowering our citizens to receive their tax returns any way they wish.

Thank you Chairman Blessing and members of the committee for allowing us to provide testimony on House Bill 441. We would be happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.