

Columbus Office

77 S. High St.
13th Floor – H. District 67
Columbus, OH 43215
(614) 644-6711
Rep67@ohiohouse.gov



Committees

Education and Career Readiness-
Chair
Rules and Reference
Insurance
Community and Family Advancement
Financial Institutions, Housing and
Urban Development
Joint Education Oversight

REP. ANDREW O. BRENNER

February 27, 2018

Chairwoman Anielski, Vice Chair Hambley, Ranking Member Holmes, and members of the State and Local Government Committee, thank you for hearing sponsor testimony on House Bill 484.

The idea for House Bill 484 came to me from the Delaware General Health District (DGHD). In October of last year, our Health Commissioner, Shelia Hiddleston, brought to my attention that Health Districts are not allowed to use credit cards. This came about as a result of an inquiry into whether the DGHD was statutorily permitted to use a credit card by our county auditor. The DGHD had been using a credit card for several years, following, of course, the best practices spelled out by the office of the Auditor of State. Per the recommendation of the Delaware County Prosecutor’s office, the DGHD rescinded the use of their credit card immediately and sought avenues to remedy the situation – legislation being the first option. As other political subdivisions have used legislation to acquire the use of credit cards in the past, House Bill 484 will be used in the same way.

This bill would authorize the use of credit cards by city and general health districts and can only be used for work related expenses. Examples of how a credit card would be used by a city or general health district would include office supplies and repairs or replacements of broken equipment. The debt incurred on the credit card would be paid for by funds appropriated by the city or general health district board specifically for that card. House Bill 484 also specifies the misuse of a credit card by a health district officer or employee for the purpose of defrauding the health district as a violation of current law. The penalty for committing this crime can range from a first degree misdemeanor to a third degree felony (ORC 3709.42).

Before I wrap up, I would like to put this problem into perspective. At the end of January, the DGHD had a crisis pop up when one of their refrigerators broke down – their vaccine refrigerator. This vital piece of equipment holds roughly \$30,000 worth of vaccines at any given time and I would guess upwards of that during cold and flu season. The DGHD is fortunate that they were able to have another facility hold their vaccines while their fridge was being repaired. The concern at the back of everyone’s minds, however, was, how were they going to pay for the repairs? Again, The DGHD was fortunate that the Delaware County Auditor, George Kaitsa, was able to cut them a check upon receipt of the invoice from the

mechanic the day of the repairs. Those repairs totaled \$2,400. Had our county auditor's office not been available to cut a check, the DGHD would have had to use a personal credit card for the repairs. This is why House Bill 484 is so important. Lastly, I would like to note that there will be an amendment to this bill in the future. The amendment comes from my fellow resident of Delaware County, Rep. Carfagna. This amendment would allow a current county health department to identify itself as a health district, health department, department of health, or a name that includes the term "public health". The goal of this amendment would be to provide uniformity when it comes to labeling a health district.

Chairwoman Anielski, Vice Chair Hambley, Ranking Member Holmes, and members of the State and Local Government Committee, thank you again for allowing me to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 484 and I am more than happy to answer any questions at this time.