



OHIO NEWS MEDIA ASSOCIATION | 1335 DUBLIN ROAD, SUITE 216-B | COLUMBUS OH 43215
MONICA NIEPORTE, PRESIDENT & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Ohio House State and Local Government Committee
House Bill 46—Government Expenditure Database
Written Testimony of Monica Nieporte
President & Executive Director / Ohio News Media Association
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Chairman Wiggam; Vice Chair Ginter, Ranking Member Kelly and members of the House Committee on State and Local Government, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in favor of House Bill 46. As we've stated in previous testimony, the current Ohio Checkbook website operated by the Treasurer of State is very easy to use and effective for journalists, business people and everyday citizens. It would be a shame if state government does not continue this effort in the future so a statutory requirement makes sense.

In our opinion, the treasurer's office website richly deserves its status as a national model for other "checkbook" sites. It is superior to the OBM site in what web developers call "user experience." The interface is better and easier to use. It also provides some key information that the OBM website lacks, most critically the voluntary participation of local governmental bodies from around the state. It also has contact information for specific departments if citizens have additional questions. These assets should be maintained.

Providing free access to the database and having state entities put a link to it on their own websites creates a "self-serve" environment which should help citizens and journalists find the information they are seeking on their own without having to make a traditional public records request. This is a time savings for both the information seeker and the employees who respond to such requests.

We urge the committee to favorably report HB 46, to continue to allow citizens and journalists to have transparency concerning how public funds are spent.