



## **Sponsor Testimony**

### **Representative Dave Greenspan**

#### **House Bill 46**

Chair Schuring, Vice Chair Rulli, Ranking Member O'Brien, and members of the Senate General Government and Agency Review Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer sponsor testimony on behalf of House Bill 46, which will codify a state government expenditure database known as the Ohio Checkbook.

Ohioans should know how the state is spending their hard-earned money. You may recall that in 2014 Ohio was ranked among other states as 46<sup>th</sup> in terms of transparency in government spending by the U.S. Public Interest Research Group. As a result, in December 2014, under existing authority, former Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel unveiled [www.ohiocheckbook.com](http://www.ohiocheckbook.com). The website is an easily accessible, searchable database of state expenditures for our taxpayers to hold state government accountable for spending. More than 1,100 political subdivisions, in all 88 counties, provide data for the Ohio Checkbook – and that number continues to grow.

The website, arguably the best of its kind in the Nation, reflects the intent of this legislation, but it could readily be taken down by a future treasurer of state. House Bill 46 will ensure that future treasurers, regardless of political affiliation or commitment to transparency, maintain this important tool that already is providing more accountable government to our state's residents. In fact, less than one year after the website's activation, Ohio moved from 46<sup>th</sup> in the country to 1<sup>st</sup> for transparency in government spending.

Our taxpayers deserve know what their money is being spent on and where their money is being spent. Our taxpayers deserve to know we are committed to advancing efficient, effective state government that respects them. Quite simply, our taxpayers deserve better. And one of the best ways to accomplish this objective is to allow Ohioans to help us root out government waste, fraud, and abuse.

If this legislation is familiar, it is because it has appeared before the legislature in one form or another for several General Assemblies. In the 131<sup>st</sup> General Assembly this legislation unanimously passed the House in April 2015 with 74 co-sponsors.

The codification of the online checkbook will provide our constituents with the ability to connect with state government and provide citizen oversight of direct government spending, which has never been possible prior to this database.

Thank you, again, for allowing me the opportunity to offer sponsor testimony on House Bill 46. I would be happy to answer any questions at this time.