



**County
Commissioners
Association of Ohio**

Serving Ohio Counties Since 1880

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To: Members of the House Community and Family Advancement Committee

From: Kate Neithammer, CCAO Policy Analyst

Date: November 28, 2017

RE: Support for House Bill 340

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on House Bill 340. The County Commissioners Association of Ohio (CCAO) is a bi-partisan organization that proudly represents the county commissioners, county executives and council members from all of Ohio's 88 counties.

CCAO supports HB 340, which seeks to achieve better data sharing practices between county family service agencies that are administering public assistance, children services, child support and workforce programs.

As you know, many of these programs are serving the same clients, yet each has a different data system. County caseworkers used to be able to see into these various systems to help them stay up-to-date on changing information, but as new systems have been developed, their ability to access data from these sources has narrowed.

Today, most workers cannot use their computer to easily verify the information available in these other systems. Adding to the frustration is the fact that they are allowed to share data but it has to be via a manual process (on paper or phone), not via electronic channels. Your committee has already heard multiple examples of how this outdated method of communication results in an isolated approach that can slow down what should be an effective and comprehensive process for both worker and client.

The goal of HB 340 is to help these workers better utilize the technology they have at their fingertips while still complying with state and federal law. If accomplished, this will give caseworkers the access they need to serve families in a more holistic and efficient manner. They will be able to provide better customer service, reduce duplicative work and protect themselves and those they serve as they are out in the field.

Thank you for your work on the Community and Family Advancement Committee. We look forward to the continuation of this important conversation as the bill moves through the committee process and we encourage its passage.



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