**Sponsor Testimony for House Bill 647**

**House Civil Justice Committee**

**November 28th, 2018**

Chair Butler, Vice Chair Pelanda, and Ranking Member Boggs thank you for giving my co-sponsor and me the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony today for House Bill 647, which is also known as the Wire Fraud Information Act.

Each year from telephone scams alone, scammers steal an estimated $9.5 billion dollars. While scammers can of course target anyone, there are a variety of schemes that specifically target the elderly and veterans across our state. For example, the so-called “Grandparent Scam” is designed to take advantage of grandparents like me, by fooling us into providing monetary assistance to an injured or endangered grandchild. It is often times only after money has been wired to assist the grandchild that grandparents, who have been urged to act in secrecy, find out that they have been swindled. Yearly, this scam costs seniors $328 million dollars.

House Bill 647, as well as House Bill 648, which we will also be providing testimony on today as well, are designed to protect not just seniors and other vulnerable members of our community, but all of us as we face a new era of ever-changing scams and diversifying means to contact and trick us. It is important that we act now to solve these problems.

I want to again thank Chair Butler, Vice Chair Lanese, and Ranking Member Boggs for allowing me to provide testimony today. I will now turn it over to my co-sponsor, Rep. Scherer, to provide further testimony.

Thank you Rep. Brown. I want to echo Rep. Brown in thanking Chair Butler, Vice Chair Pelanda, and Ranking Member Boggs for allowing us to discuss this important piece of legislation today.

House Bill 647 embraces a policy of increasing consumer knowledge about ongoing scams and acting as a last line of defense against scammers. The Wire Fraud Information Act would require the Attorney General to draft a short, informative statement that would be provided to all individuals seeking to place a wire transfer through a financial institution.

The statement would be designed to be a last line of defense for individuals who may have been scammed. The Attorney General’s statement, while broad in what this law mandates, would be intended to share about information about the risk of financial fraud and the types of scams that are currently prevalent. Increasing the information being circulated about common frauds and their risks will help us to reduce the likelihood that the scammers succeed in robbing Ohioans of their hard-earned money.

I join Rep. Brown in calling for the passage of this legislation and I too thank the committee for its time. We will now answer any questions that the committee may have.