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**Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee  
Senate Bill 44—Campaign Electronic Filing  
Testimony of Dennis Hetzel, Executive Director**

Chairman Coley, Vice Chair Uecker, Ranking Member Yuko, and members of the Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Dennis Hetzel and I am the Executive Director of the Ohio News Media Association. I am here today to offer support for Senate Bill 44, sponsored by State Senator Frank LaRose.

As Senator LaRose noted in his sponsor testimony, this legislation would create greater transparency for local government elections in Ohio. As a result, news organizations can readily provide more detailed, timely coverage of local elections across the state. Citizens would also have greater access to campaign finance information for their elected officials.

Since this bill is permissive, it will not become an unfunded mandate for county boards of election, though we believe that the public interest would be better served by mandatory electronic filing. The requirement to transmit the statement to the Secretary of State within five business days hardly seems onerous. We also would hope that the Secretary of State would work closely with local government entities to facilitate. If voluntary cooperation falls short of expectations, we will urge the Legislature to make electronic filing a requirement.

This is a pro-transparency piece of legislation that would create consistency between local government races and elections for general assembly and statewide offices. We encourage your support for this bill.

Thank you for your time, and I would be happy to answer any questions that you might have.