



Department of Political Science
University of Cincinnati
PO Box 210375
Cincinnati, Ohio 45221

Crosley Tower 1100
(513) 556-3314

February 20, 2019

Senator Bill Coley
Statehouse
1st Floor South, Room 140
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Senator Coley,

I am writing in support of SB 52, which creates the Ohio Cyber Reserve. Due to an overseas trip, I am unable to appear before the Senate Government Oversight & Reform Committee's hearings but I hope these written comments will convey my strong support appropriately.

As the Head of the Department of Political Science and Professor at the University of Cincinnati, I have conducted research on national cyber security strategy and policy for 24 years. In doing so, I have had the opportunity to translate that research into policy at both the national and state levels. In 2016, I went on loan from UC and served as the inaugural Scholar-in-Residence at United States Cyber Command and National Security Agency. In 2017, I served as a Fulbright professor in Cyber Studies at Oxford University, where I also worked with the United Kingdom's government. I continue to serve in an advisory role with US Cyber Command and other US government agencies. Previously, Governor Kasich appointed me to serve on the Ohio Cybersecurity, Workforce and Economic Development Council and I advised on the state of Ohio's Cyber Strategy.

This current and previous work leads me to support SB 52. It represents an innovative 21st century update to the Ohio organized militia to better protect the state of Ohio. Cyberspace is simultaneously a vibrant and vulnerable environment. It is incumbent upon us to develop public policy that ensures that cyberspace's vibrancy will not succumb to its vulnerability. Because of its interconnected nature, we must be capable at the state-level of dealing with a full range of exploitation that can undermine local governments (we have had cases of ransomware shutting down cities), disrupt critical infrastructure, interfere with economic activity and development (through crime and theft of intellectual property), and raise doubts about election integrity, just to name a few attacks that have occurred nationally in the past year. The Ohio Cyber Reserve will begin to provide the state with a capacity to defend and mitigate attacks that otherwise might spread throughout state and local systems. While one cannot predict the future, it is prudent to assume that cyber attacks will continue to improve in sophistication, scale and scope. Rather than wait for a major catastrophe to motivate new efforts at providing greater security for our citizens, this bill will place Ohio on the front foot. The volunteer nature of the reserve is actually in line with national efforts to re-think how we must become, at the individual level, engaged



cybersecurity citizens. We must take responsibility for our own interfaces with the digital domain and promote good cybersecurity practices with our fellow citizens. This is a critical secondary impact of the Ohio Cyber Reserve. It will create a cadre of experienced volunteers that will bring back to their companies, families, and friends the message (and skills) that we must work every day to improve cybersecurity.

In addition to advancing the security of our state and its citizens, the Ohio Cyber Reserve has the opportunity to serve as a best practice model for the nation. In my work with US Cyber Command, we are introducing new operational strategies and frameworks to combat cyber aggression. We are beginning to examine new methods and organizational forms that can leverage both the private sector on one hand and authorities associated with the National Guard, for example. The Ohio Cyber Reserve will stand out as model that draws from both. If passed and implemented, I will certainly be an advocate in Washington, DC suggesting to our national leaders the need to study what Ohio is doing to lead the way.

There are no clear borders in cyberspace. Outside threats, ranging from those seeking financial gain to those that want to challenge the United States' position in the world find seams within cyberspace to work within and through to advance their interests. The national government must partner with states, the private sector and our citizens if we are going to improve cybersecurity, close those seams, and leverage all of the benefits that flow from networked computing. SB 52 is a crucial step in that positive direction. It will provide Ohio with resiliency and a better engaged citizenry. I urge SB 52's passage.

I want to thank you for the opportunity to add my support to create the Ohio Cyber Reserve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Richard J. Harknett". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Richard J. Harknett, PhD
Professor and Chair Department of Political Science

CC: Senate Government Oversight & Reform Committee

Sincerely,