

# RICHARD H. JEFFREY

## ERIE COUNTY AUDITOR

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Chairman Manning, Vice Chairman Brenner, Ranking Member Maharath, and members of the Senate Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs Committee, thank you for this opportunity to submit written proponent testimony regarding HB 450 on behalf of the County Auditor's Association of Ohio.

If enacted, HB450 would create a certificate of transition which will provide local government fiscal officers a checklist to ensure a smooth exchange of information between outgoing and incoming fiscal officers.

The County Auditor is Chief Fiscal Officer of the county. It is his/her responsibility to account for the millions of dollars received each year by the County and to issue warrants (checks) in payment of all County obligations, including the distribution of tax dollars to the townships, villages, cities, school district and library systems as well as other county agencies. The Auditor's General Accounting Department is the watchdog over all county funds and maintains the official records of all receipts, disbursements and fund balances.

Ohio's County Auditors understand the responsibility that comes with being the fiscal officer of the county and support ways to be more transparent during a time of transition. We believe the creation of a Certificate of Transition will create a nice checklist of items and information that an outgoing office holder must provide to their successor before leaving office.

On a personal note when I first was elected Erie County Auditor in 2010 the margin of victory was seven (7) votes and we spent the next three and a half months in court defending the County Board of Elections. When the case was decided in my favor by the Court in Erie County I reached out to the Auditor and sought to have a dialog about a smooth transition. He refused my calls and the meeting never happened. Because the Erie County Auditor's Office had exceptional people working in the Office, we avoided a potential disaster during the transition. I was lucky and because of my situation, I understand what can happen and whole heartedly support this legislation.

The CAAO would like to thank Representative Jason Stephens and Ohio Auditor Keith Faber for bringing forward HB450 and believe it will create more transparency to the state's local taxpayer.

Richard Jeffrey  
Erie County Auditor