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Sponsor Testimony – Senate Bill 63
House State & Local Government Committee
Senator Sandra O'Brien
May 12, 2021

Chair Wiggam, Vice Chair John, Ranking Member Kelly, and members of the House State & Local Government Committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to deliver sponsor testimony today on Senate Bill 63. This is a very simple piece of legislation which allows a board of county commissioners to authorize a county department of probation to accept payments via credit card.

Currently, boards of county commissioners have the ability under section 301.28 of the Ohio Revised Code to authorize county officials to utilize financial transaction devices (such as credit cards among others) to accept payments for county expenses. However, the wording of the definition of “county official” in this section excludes a county probation department from being able to accept payments via credit card. Even though county probation departments accept certain fees that are ordered by the court of common pleas (but which are not collected by the clerk of the court of common pleas), they cannot be authorized to accept these fees using financial transaction devices because the court of common pleas itself is not listed as a “county official” in this section.

This legislation provides an easy fix by explicitly allowing county probation departments to accept payments for county expenses ordered by the court of common pleas through financial transaction devices if its respective board of county commissioners authorizes county officials to do so under this section. Similar language already exists under this section for county boards of health and county boards of law library resources. The bill also states that for multicounty boards of probation, all county boards of commissioners must provide authorization. There will be no additional costs to either the State or to the counties, as any fees will be passed on to the individual providing payment to the county department of probation.

SB 63 passed the Senate unanimously and will continue our objective of streamlining the functions of state government. It will make the process much smoother for both the county probation departments accepting payments and the individuals providing them, ensuring a win all around for the taxpayers.

Thank you again Mr. Chair for letting me offer sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 63. I am happy to answer any questions from the members of the Committee.