

#### 4<sup>th</sup> House District

Parts of NE Franklin County  
Including Gahanna, New Albany,  
Westerville, Blacklick, Columbus, and  
area townships



#### 135<sup>th</sup> General Assembly Committees

Agriculture  
Energy & Natural Resources  
Higher Education  
Pensions, Ranking Member  
Primary & Secondary Education

### **Representative Mary Lightbody 4<sup>th</sup> House District**

Testimony to the House State and Local Government Committee  
House Bill 74  
March 21, 2023

Chair John, Vice Chair Dean, Ranking Member Brennan, and members of the House State and Local Government Committee, thank you for allowing Representative Hall and me to provide sponsor testimony for House Bill 74.

This bill is a reintroduction of House Bill 230 from the 134<sup>th</sup> General Assembly. The bill was considered in the Technology and Innovation Committee, of which Rep Hall was vice chair and I was the ranking member. The version in front of you now is the same as the version that a) was voted out of that committee 11-0, b) received strong bi-partisan support and had 45 co-sponsors, and passed the House 88-0, c) was considered by the Senate Financial Institutions and Technology Committee, but d) ran out of time to get across the finish line. There were no opponents anywhere along the way.

As described by Representative Hall in his testimony, there are several major parts to this legislation, all with the aim of collecting information about Information Technology (IT) practices in Ohio and the needs of our many state agencies and offices of statewide elected officials. I propose to add some of the rationale for the bill in my testimony today.

The purpose is to understand how best to modernize our practices, increase efficiencies, better handle the workload, reduce redundancies, improve user experiences, and control costs. The bill proposes to achieve these goals by having the State Chief Information Officer (Katrina Flory) and Deputy (Kristina Hagberg) determine how best to migrate the state's information technology systems to the State of Ohio Computer Center and to the state's cloud environment. They will get some help from the new Biannual Advisory Committee on State Information and Technology and from the new Cybersecurity and Fraud Advisory Board, which will be created when this bill is signed into law.

During testimony in the Technology and Innovation Committee, we learned about the many challenges that state agencies experience because their computer systems are hopelessly outdated, and procedures are often still paper based in an increasingly digital world. For example, Department of Commerce Director Sheryl Maxfeld spoke about the challenges her department faces. Her department has a number of dated technology issues, such as the unclaimed funds system, and over 100 IT projects which she estimated would require 13-18 years to complete with her current staff, funding, and equipment. She described how the pandemic exacerbated the issue especially with liquor and real estate licensing, much of which still relies on paper records and

applications. The information on those applications has to be entered into state computers using state staff time. Those of us who were in the House during the height of the COVID pandemic heard from constituents and JFS staff members about the difficulties faced by the unemployment compensation system, due in part to outdated technology and systems.

HB 74 will start Ohio on a path to updating its computer systems and software, improving communication and collaboration between agencies, controlling costs for IT, improving cyber security, and preventing fraud.

If passed, HB74 will provide the data and information we need as legislators to augment the work of the Innovate Ohio Platform<sup>1</sup> created by Governor DeWine, currently lead by Lt. Governor Husted, which has started the effort to make state government in Ohio more effective and efficient while also improving customer service and saving tax dollars through the use of 21<sup>st</sup> century technology.

HB74 will help us prioritize the modernization of computer system, increase the security of data, and allow employees in our state agencies to communicate more easily with each other and improve the experiences of Ohioans with whom they interact.

In short HB 74 will bring Ohio into the 21st century and will lay out a pathway to the upgrades and improvements that are long overdue.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this important piece of legislation. Along with Representative Hall, I would be happy to answer any questions the committee members may have.

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<sup>1</sup> created by Governor DeWine in [Executive Order 2019-15D](#), called “Modernizing Information Technology Systems in State Agencies”