



**Testimony of
JAKE LESTOCK
CTIA**

Ohio Senate Bill 50

**Before the
Ohio Senate Financial Institutions and Technology Committee**

May 23, 2023

Chair Wilson, Vice-Chair Hackett, Ranking Member Smith, and members of the committee, on behalf of CTIA®, the trade association for the wireless communications industry, I write to raise concerns with Senate Bill 50, which looks to make dramatic changes to Ohio's 911 statute.

CTIA and its members appreciate and work closely with our public safety partners to provide communities with reliable emergency services networks and support the transition to Next Generation 911 (NG911) as it offers significant benefits for the public and emergency responders. Wireless providers are actively engaged in facilitating the transition to NG911. However, SB 50 contains provisions that would be extremely burdensome for wireless carriers and consumers, including raising taxes, creating uncertainty in an attempt to expand the tax base, and changing state law to allow multiple impositions of new taxes.

It is critically important to note that Governor DeWine has appropriately recognized the need to transition Public Safety Answering Points across Ohio to NG911 and has accounted for the necessary additional funding for this upgrade in the budget legislation –



HB 33. That bill includes an appropriation of nearly \$47 million over the next biennium toward that goal. Our industry is fully supportive that HB 33 retains this important funding. This dedicated funding should be directed toward the significant one-time costs associated with this transition before determining the need for a tax increase on wireless consumers.

There are ongoing discussions amongst stakeholders, including wireless providers, and progress is being made to craft consensus amendments that address concerns we have raised in previous testimony. Unfortunately, those amendments are not reflected in the current version of SB 50. The appropriation in the current budget bill is the appropriate mechanism to fund the transition to NG911, and we respectfully urge the Committee to pursue that solution. We also ask that you postpone further consideration of SB 50 until the agreed upon amendments are included in the bill. Thank you for your consideration.