Senate Financial Institutions and Technology Committee
Letter of Support for House Bill 74
January 23, 2024

Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Hackett, Ranking Member Smith, and members of the Senate Financial Institutions and Technology Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 74. My name is Jennifer Kerber, Senior Director of Government Relations for Socure. I have been crafting and advancing government information technology policy, including identity management policies, for more than 20 years.

Socure is a leading provider of identity verification and fraud detection solutions, committed to assisting governments in modernizing their digital services. We are dedicated to leveraging cutting-edge technologies, such as artificial intelligence, to deliver the most accurate and inclusive platform for verifying an individual's identity and prevent fraud.

We firmly believe House Bill 74 presents a remarkable opportunity for the State of Ohio to enhance its technological infrastructure, prevent fraud, promote efficiency through centralized management and strategic planning, and make informed IT investments that align with future needs. By streamlining IT infrastructure and adopting forward-looking strategies, Ohio can set a precedent for other states to follow.

We particularly applaud the establishment of a Cybersecurity and Fraud Advisory Board, which will facilitate collaboration among various state agencies. The Cybersecurity and Fraud Advisory Board is crucial for Ohio to proactively address the complex and evolving threats in the digital age. It helps protect critical infrastructure, personal information, the economy, and public safety while also promoting collaboration and deterrence against cybercriminals and fraudsters. As we learned during the pandemic, organized criminal rings are targeting online government services to steal millions of taxpayer dollars. This board's focus on formulating best practice recommendations will guide Ohio toward efficient and secure IT infrastructure practices. We recommend regular consultations with industry experts to stay abreast of technological advancements, new fraud patterns, and best practices. Such a board will play a pivotal role in harmonizing strategies across state agencies and promoting a standardized approach to IT system modernization. Its creation is imperative for ensuring that Ohio's IT systems remain agile and resilient in the ever-evolving cybersecurity landscape.

Socure wholeheartedly supports the provisions in House Bill 74 that mandate the development of a strategic roadmap and a centralized asset list. The importance of maintaining a comprehensive inventory of software, applications, and end points cannot be overstated. Effective asset management and oversight are instrumental in preventing redundancy, reducing costs, and enhancing security. Furthermore, a well-structured strategic roadmap paves the way for a systematic transition to modernized platforms, resulting in increased efficiency, improved data accessibility, and long-term cost savings.

As government services increasingly migrate online to better serve the needs of citizens, we commend Ohio's leadership for accelerating the modernization of government IT systems, enhancement of cybersecurity practices, and embracing of industry best practices. House Bill 74 embodies Ohio's commitment to delivering improved government services while prioritizing the security and satisfaction of its constituents.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Socure's strong endorsement of House Bill 74 and our belief in its potential to propel Ohio's IT infrastructure into a bright and secure future. We want to thank Representative Hall and former Representative Lightbody for their leadership. We are excited about the positive impact this legislation will have on Ohioans and their interactions with government services.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Kerber