



State Representative Ismail Mohamed Ohio House District 3

Sponsor Testimony: House Bill 475

Thank you Chair Claggett, Vice Chair Workman and members of the Technology & Innovation committee, for the opportunity to offer sponsor testimony on House Bill 475.

Cybersecurity threats are becoming more sophisticated and more frequent, targeting not only large corporations but also local governments and critical public systems across Ohio. When these systems are compromised, the effects can be devastating impacting emergency response, utilities, public safety, and even election systems.

Unfortunately, many municipalities lack the technical resources to prevent or respond to these attacks. While the Governor's Executive Order established the State Cybersecurity Strategic Advisor and the Ohio Cyber Reserve, these programs have not yet been written into law. House Bill 475 changes that.

This legislation creates a permanent, coordinated structure for assessing local cybersecurity infrastructure and responding to threats. It ensures that municipalities have access to trained professionals, reliable communication channels, and consistent state support when incidents occur.

By codifying these protections, HB 475 strengthens Ohio's preparedness and helps local governments recover more quickly from cyberattacks. It also allows the state to contract with certified private cybersecurity firms, so even our smallest communities can access expert help when needed.

Over the past several years, cyberattacks have disrupted local governments, hospitals, and schools across the country, often costing millions in recovery and lost data. HB 475 takes a proactive approach to reduce those risks before they become crises.

This bill is about preparedness, protection, and partnership. It ensures every level of government in Ohio has the tools and structure needed to defend against modern cyber threats and positions our state as a leader in cybersecurity readiness.

Thank you again for your time and attention to this important legislation. I will now turn it over to Rep. White for further testimony.