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**Ohio House Technology and Innovation Committee
Written Interested Party Testimony – House Bill 413
Adam Schwiebert, Managing Director of Policy
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Chairman Claggett, Vice Chair Workman, Ranking Member Mohamed, and members of House Technology and Innovation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit interested party testimony on House Bill 413.

Counties strongly support transparency in government operations and have no reservations about demonstrating how taxpayer dollars are used. County governments operate under extensive public accountability requirements, including publicly adopted budgets, annual financial reports, audits, and public records obligations.

While counties support the intent of House Bill 413, there are important questions about implementation and the potential administrative and technological demands it may place on counties if those issues are not clearly addressed.

House Bill 413 would require counties and other political subdivisions to participate in a new Local Government Expenditure Database administered by the Treasurer of State. Depending on how the database is designed and what reporting requirements are established through rulemaking, counties may need to dedicate additional staff time or invest in new technology to comply. These concerns are especially acute for smaller and rural counties with limited staffing and IT capacity.

The bill grants broad rulemaking authority to the Treasurer of State to define required expenditure and revenue data, but it does not specify reporting frequency or ensure alignment with existing county accounting systems. Without such clarity, counties face uncertainty about staffing needs, workflow impacts, and compliance costs.

While the bill appropriates funding to the Treasurer of State to develop and maintain the database, it requires counties to comply using existing resources. For many counties, particularly those that may need to modify or integrate financial systems, this could result in new, unfunded costs.

CCAO respectfully offers the following recommendations to improve the bill and support successful implementation:



- Design required data fields and reporting formats to maximize interoperability with existing county accounting and financial systems.
- Specify reasonable reporting intervals to avoid unnecessary administrative burden.
- Provide funding assistance or technical support to help counties with system integration and compliance costs.
- Allow counties with existing financial transparency portals that meet state requirements to link to their own systems rather than duplicating reporting.
- Provide counties a reasonable implementation period once reporting requirements are finalized.

Counties are willing partners in transparency efforts. Additional statutory clarity, flexibility, and support for local governments would be beneficial to ensure that any statewide transparency initiative avoids unintended administrative burdens or additional taxpayer expense.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments. CCAO looks forward to continued engagement as the committee considers this legislation.