



**House Technology and Innovation Committee
Written- Interested Party Testimony – House Bill 413
February 17, 2026**

Chairman Claggett, Vice Chair Workman, Ranking Member Mohamed, and members of the House Technology and Innovation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit interested party testimony on House Bill 413.

My name is Jay Smith, and I am the Director of Government and Legal Services for the Ohio Library Council (OLC). The OLC is the statewide association representing Ohio's 251 public library systems, which include rural, urban, and suburban libraries, and the 7.4 million library cardholders they serve.

Ohio's public libraries are separate political subdivisions created under ORC 3375 and are governed by appointed boards of trustees. As such, they function under strict regulations and government oversight, including audits by the Auditor of State and compliance with Ohio's Sunshine Laws (the Public Records Act and the Open Meetings Act). These laws ensure that library board meetings are open to the public and that records are readily available for inspection.

While some public libraries voluntarily participate in the Ohio Checkbook program, we are concerned that HB 413 would mandate participation in a new Local Government Expenditure Database managed by the Treasurer of State. Many of our libraries may lack the administrative capacity or technology to comply with this mandate, particularly following the recent state budget (HB 96), which reduced state funding for public libraries by more than \$25 million in FY26 as compared to FY25.

Cybersecurity is another area of growing concern for us. While transparency remains a primary goal, we are concerned that insecurely posted information may expose public institutions to increased risk and exploitation by cybercriminals.

Public libraries in Ohio strongly support transparency and already operate under rigorous scrutiny regarding records, meetings, and financial data. Our primary concern is that HB 413 may place a substantial, unfunded burden and new administrative obligations on systems that are already managing reduced budgets.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony. We look forward to working with the committee as HB 413 is further discussed.