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HB 505 Proponent Testimony
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February 24th, 2026

Good morning, Chairman Claggett, Vice Chair Workman, Ranking Member Mohamed, and members of the Ohio House Technology and Innovation Committee. Thank you for allowing me to provide proponent testimony on House Bill 505. My name is Corey Jordan, and I am the Director of Policy and Legislation testifying here today on behalf of the Attorney General's Office. House Bill 505 seeks to apply Ohio's existing "Son of Sam" law, and its underlying principles, to crowdfunding platforms.

As highlighted in Representatives Odioso and Abrams' sponsor testimonies, Ohio's "Son of Sam" statute at its core prevents a criminal from profiting off their crimes. In May of last year, tragedy struck when Hamilton County Sheriff's Deputy Larry Henderson was struck by a car and killed while working as part of a traffic control unit at the University of Cincinnati's campus. Subsequently, a crowdfunding campaign was initiated on a national platform for the benefit of Deputy Henderson's alleged killer and his family. The campaign is still active and has raised over \$55,000.

Under current law, crowdfunding platforms and the tremendous work they do on behalf of charitable causes operate in somewhat of a grey area. House Bill 505 takes a creative approach seeking to treat them as a charitable solicitor which is a "licensed" activity through our Charitable Law Section. Importantly, the charitable solicitor registration required by Ohio law was reauthorized in its most recent inspection as part of the legislature's occupational licensing review process.

House Bill 505 will require a crowdfunding platform operating in Ohio to include in its terms of service a prohibition on fundraising in support of any calls to violence or other unlawful purposes. Additionally, platforms will be required to ensure campaigns are held accountable should the campaign organizer misuse the funds and alter the donor's charitable intent. Platforms will also be required to keep accurate records of all fundraisers involving Ohio campaigns and will also be required to disclose those records to our office.

The legislation also outlines a mechanism to refund donations should the campaign be cancelled due to violating the platform's terms of service or the subsequent alteration of the mission of the campaign. Failure to abide by any of the requirements placed upon the platform would result in a \$10,000 fine. Finally, the bill contains enforcement and investigatory powers for the Attorney General's Office to ensure compliance with the law.

Our office, in conjunction with the sponsors, are currently refining the bill while working with industry leaders to minimize bureaucracy, tamp down on potential fraud, and maintain the same level of

accountability as proposed by the bill before you today. We hope to have a substitute bill ready in the near future to present to the committee for its consideration.

In closing, crowdfunding platforms are a welcome method to raise and solicit charitable donations in Ohio. With the commonsense approach being proposed by House Bill 505, we can ensure criminals are not profiting from their wrongdoing, and donations are being used consistent with their donative intent. Chairman Claggett and members of this committee, I urge you to support House Bill 505. I would be happy to take any questions at this time.