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Senate Financial Institutions, Insurance and Technology Committee

Senate Bill 203 – Proponent Testimony

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Chairman Wilson, Vice Chair Lang, Ranking Member Craig, and members of the Senate Financial Institutions, Insurance and Technology Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on Senate Bill 203.

In a time when cybersecurity incidents are becoming more prevalent, cybersecurity is top of mind for county governments across the state. CCAO thanks Senator Schaffer for introducing Senate Bill 203 as a positive step in the state-county partnership on cybersecurity. Throughout the development of the bill, the sponsor and the Auditor of State's office convened many interested party conversations with CCAO members and accepted feedback. CCAO appreciates this inclusive process.

Senate Bill 203 allows counties, and other political subdivisions, to design and implement a cybersecurity program that works for their specific needs. The local flexibility in the aspects of the program, as well as the ability to update as frequently as needed, is crucial to the success of the programs on the ground. The Auditor of State will audit to the county's specific policies, ensuring accountability in this structure that still maintains local control. Many counties already invest in cyber programs and policies that are operational today and Senate Bill 203 allows these governments to continue the course they have already charted.

The development of local cybersecurity programs is a sensitive process. Senate Bill 203 provides definitions of these events and programs and exempts the details and procurement information from public records. These exemptions provide protection for counties and other local governments against bad actors who may use the information to more effectively attack our infrastructure.

In the unfortunate event that a political subdivision experiences a cybersecurity incident or ransomware attack, Senate Bill 203 requires passage of a resolution if the entity chooses to comply with the ransom. The bill also requires any political subdivision to report to the Division of Homeland Security within the Department of Public Safety and the Auditor of State's office. These provisions promote transparency and allow for centralized statewide data. Such information can be valuable when learning about the scope of this issue in the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this legislation. CCAO respectfully asks the committee to favorably report Senate Bill 203.

