Ohio House of Representatives

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Sponsor Testimony – House Bill 650

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Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Lang, Ranking Member Craig, and members of the committee – thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 650.

Through my service on the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) Task Force on AI, Cybersecurity, and Privacy, I have had the opportunity to immerse myself in discussions with lawmakers across the country who are asking many of the same questions we are today in this committee. I have also had conversations with leaders from companies like Google Global, Apple, Palo Alto, and other innovators operating at the forefront of artificial intelligence, advanced quantum computing, and emerging technologies. What became clear to me is that innovation is accelerating faster than government is adapting, and we need to close that gap intentionally.

As you all know well, we are living through a technological revolution. Artificial intelligence, quantum computing, advanced automation, biotechnology, autonomous systems, and next-generation cybersecurity tools are no longer distant possibilities. They are actively reshaping industries in real time. AI systems are being used in hospitals to analyze medical imaging, assist in diagnostics, and accelerate drug discovery. In manufacturing facilities, robotics and predictive analytics are optimizing production lines, reducing waste, and strengthening supply chains. Financial institutions are deploying AI to detect fraud, manage risk, write code, and secure transactions within seconds.

At the same time, quantum research is advancing encryption capabilities and computational modeling that could fundamentally transform national security and materials science. Biotech innovations, including gene editing and precision medicine, are changing how we treat disease and approach agriculture. Agentic AI systems are moving beyond simple automation and evolving into decision support tools that can plan, adapt, and execute complex tasks. Soon, these agents will be fully capable of independently operating commercial operations, even on a global scale. Autonomous transportation technologies, including self-driving vehicles and drone logistics, are redefining mobility and commerce.

In education, adaptive learning platforms and AI-powered tutoring tools are personalizing instruction for students. Businesses of every size are integrating intelligent chatbots, data analytics, and automated customer service platforms into their daily operations. Cybersecurity systems are evolving to defend increasingly digital infrastructure, including our energy grid, water systems, financial networks, healthcare systems, and public safety operations.

These developments are not happening in isolation. They are converging, compounding, and accelerating one another. The result is a transformation that is broad, fast moving, and deeply impactful across every sector of our economy.

Technology is evolving faster than traditional policy frameworks were designed to adapt. In many cases, innovation is outpacing governance. As policymakers, that should not intimidate us. It should motivate us. We cannot be incapacitated by the fear of "what if" as these developments evolve. It is incumbent upon us as legislators to fully understand what we're dealing with and prepare forward-looking policies to ensure these developments protect, uplift, and preserve the greater good and security of all Ohioans.

House Bill 650 creates a responsible and structured way for Ohio to study and strategically position ourselves in frontier technologies and quantum innovation. It ensures that Ohio is not simply reacting to technological change but actively shaping how it unfolds within our state. The intention here is to bring together industry experts and lawmakers who, together, will dive deeper and consider how best to position Ohio as a leader in this new tech era.

With the amendment before the committee, we are clarifying the objectives of this effort. Specifically, the study group will be tasked with four key responsibilities.

First, determining the necessity for a permanent strategic statewide commission. Before establishing something long-standing, we must thoughtfully assess whether a formal statewide structure is warranted and clearly define its scope. This bill ensures that such decisions are guided by experts and stakeholders rather than made in isolation.

Second, examining the economic and workforce impact. Emerging technologies will redefine jobs, create new industries, and disrupt others. Ohio has always been a state built on innovation, from aviation to advanced manufacturing. We must evaluate how to attract investment, support entrepreneurship, and prepare our workforce for the skills that are in high demand now, and will be even more so in five, ten, and twenty years. That includes partnerships with higher education, career technical training programs, and private industry.

Third, evaluating security and infrastructure resilience. As technology advances, so do vulnerabilities. Our energy grid, water systems, financial networks, healthcare systems, and public safety infrastructure are increasingly digital. We must understand how emerging technologies can strengthen these systems while also identifying and mitigating new risks. Cybersecurity, data protection, and resilience planning must be part of this conversation from the beginning.

As we consider these advancements, we must also acknowledge emerging efforts such as Project Glasswing, a cybersecurity initiative centered on advanced artificial intelligence systems capable of identifying and exploiting software vulnerabilities at a scale and speed far

beyond traditional human capacity. Early findings show these systems have already uncovered thousands of high severity vulnerabilities across widely used digital infrastructure.

At the same time, recent research has revealed that these evolving risks are already intersecting with real world vulnerabilities. A recent analysis found that approximately 67 percent of U.S. state legislators have had their official email addresses appear in data breaches, with over 16,000 breach records identified and more than 12,000 instances involving personally identifiable information. In some cases, even plaintext passwords were exposed, creating direct pathways for account compromise and unauthorized access.

These findings underscore a broader concern. The same technologies and digital ecosystems that support innovation are also expanding the attack surface for malicious actors, lowering the barrier to entry for sophisticated cyber threats, and increasing the risk to sensitive systems and public institutions. Through my ongoing work and conversations with leaders at the forefront of these technologies, I have seen firsthand how rapidly these capabilities are advancing and how seriously those in the field view these risks. This makes clear that increasingly autonomous and sentient like technologies are not theoretical, they are already present and evolving in ways that challenge our existing security frameworks.

Fourth, establishing ethical standards and responsible innovation. Innovation without guardrails can erode public trust and pose significant security risks. As artificial intelligence and advanced computing systems become more integrated into daily life, Ohio must be thoughtful about privacy, transparency, bias mitigation, and accountability. We have an opportunity to model responsible leadership by addressing these questions early rather than after harm occurs.

Members of the Committee, other states are already moving. They are forming commissions, investing in research hubs, and building public-private partnerships designed to attract cutting edge industries. With trillions being invested in frontier tech across the country, it is critical we understand why and what Ohio needs to do to remain competitive. If we delay, we risk losing talent, capital, and opportunity. If we act deliberately now by bringing together experts, business leaders, educators, and policymakers, we position Ohio not just to compete but to lead.

This bill does not attempt to solve every technological challenge overnight. Instead, it creates a forum for collaboration. It allows us to gather data, assess risks, identify opportunities, and bring informed recommendations back to this body. It is a measured and responsible first step.

The speed of innovation will not slow down for government. The question before us is whether Ohio will move with intention or fall behind.

House Bill 650 is about urgency with responsibility. It is about protecting Ohio's economic future, strengthening our infrastructure, and ensuring that innovation reflects our values.

I respectfully ask for your support of House Bill 650 and am happy to answer any questions you might have.

Thank you,

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