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The Honorable Nathan Manning
Chairman, House Criminal Justice Committee
77 South High Street, 12th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Chairman Manning,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of House Bill 597, legislation to protect Ohioans from misleading and fraudulent callers.

An increased number of Ohioans are receiving calls falsely appearing to be from their home area code or from someone they know, a practice colloquially known as spoofing. When the call is answered, it often is not either of those scenarios. In reality, it is someone trying to mislead the person being called.

House Bill 597 will prohibit using or repeating a telephone number, exchange, or misleading caller identification information that is not assigned to the caller with the intent to defraud, cause harm, or wrongfully attain anything of value.

There is no legitimate business reason to use a fraudulent telephone number. Consumers and society as a whole should know who they are dealing with when they answer the telephone. My office is looking forward to having this additional tool to combat consumer fraud.

Thank you for your leadership and the opportunity to address this very important issue.

Very respectfully yours,

Mike DeWine
Ohio Attorney General