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Tavia Galonski State Representative

Chairman Blessing, Vice Chairman Reineke, Ranking Member Clyde, and my colleagues on the Government Accountability and Oversight Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer sponsor testimony for House Bill 532 today.

Earlier this year, all members and staff underwent mandatory sexual harassment training in light of scandal within our very workplace. Unfortunately it took scandal to prompt action. With House Bill 532, we would be taking action towards ending sexual harassment in the workplace prior to an issue arising.

For years the topic of sexual harassment has been highlighted throughout news outlets and social media. A conversation about harassment has been perpetuated as more victims come forward with their stories. Across the country workplaces are reevaluating how they handle sexual harassment and it is time for the state to do the same. As state employees, we need to be held to a high standard. Our duty is to serve the people of Ohio and to do so we must conduct ourselves in a respectful way. House Bill 532 elevates the standard that state employees ought to be held to by establishing mandatory sexual harassment training for all state employees within 60 day of being employed or sworn in. Furthermore, if passed, current employees would be required to undergo sexual harassment training within 60 days of the bill's effective date.

It is imperative that we teach our employees what sexual harassment looks like and what to do if they are harassed. Everyone deserves to feel comfortable in their workplace. We must end the culture of harassment that is prevalent in far too many workplaces. There is no place for sexual harassment anywhere, especially in state offices. We need set the example for workplace conduct and ensure a culture of respect.

Chairman Blessing, Vice Chairman Reineke, Ranking Member Clyde, and my colleagues on the Government Accountability and Oversight Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer sponsor testimony. I open myself to any questions the committee may have.