



Ohio General Assembly
House of Representatives
Columbus

Sponsor Testimony of Representatives Jonathan Dever and Dave Greenspan
Regarding House Bill 40
Before the House State and Local Government Committee
Wednesday, February 21, 2017

Chair Anielski, Vice Chair Hambley, Ranking Member Bishoff and members of the House State and Local Government Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer sponsor testimony on behalf of House Bill 40, which will codify a state government expenditure database.

Ohioans should know how the state is spending their hard-earned money. You may recall that in 2014 Ohio was ranked among other states as 46th in terms of transparency in government spending by the U.S. Public Interest Research Group. As a result, in December 2014, under existing authority, Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel unveiled www.ohiocheckbook.com. The website is an easily accessible, searchable database of state expenditures for our taxpayers to hold state government accountable for spending.

The website, arguably the best of its kind in the Nation, reflects the intent of this legislation, but it could readily be taken down by a future treasurer of state. House Bill 40 will ensure that future treasurers, regardless of political affiliation or commitment to transparency, maintain this important tool that already is providing more accountable government to our state's residents. In fact, less than one year after the website's activation, Ohio moved from 46th in the county to 1st for transparency in government spending.

Our taxpayers deserve know what their money is being spent on and where their money is being spent. Our taxpayers deserve to know we are committed to advancing efficient, effective state government that respects them. Quite simply, our taxpayers deserve better. And one of the best ways to accomplish this objective is to allow Ohioans to help us root out government waste, fraud, and abuse.

If this legislation is familiar, it is because it has appeared before the legislature in one form or another for several General Assemblies. In the 131st General Assembly this legislation unanimously passed the House in April 2015 with 74 co-sponsors.

The online checkbook will provide our constituents with the ability to connect with state government and provide citizen oversight of direct government spending, which has never been possible.

Thank you, again, for allowing us the opportunity to offer sponsor testimony on House Bill 40. We would be happy to answer any questions at this time.