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**Sponsor Testimony on Senate Bill 256**  
**Senate Government Oversight & Reform Committee**  
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Chairman Coley, Vice Chair Uecker, Ranking Member Schiavoni, members of the Government Oversight & Reform Committee, thank you for allowing me to provide Sponsor Testimony on Senate Bill 256. This legislation would make the current practice of conducting post-election audits a requirement for county boards of election under state law. Additionally, the bill would require that all county boards of election upgrade to a statistical technique called risk-limiting auditing which is widely recognized as the best practice for assuring accuracy.

Currently, post-election audits are required by directive from the Secretary of State. County Boards of Elections use the voter verified paper trail or the hand marked ballot to conduct either a percentage-based or a risk-limiting audit. Thus far they have proved successful, but now it's time to codify them and to require the use of risk limiting audits.

Choosing risk-limiting audits would save both time and money especially in regards to auditing elections with wide margins of victory. Under a percentage-based system, a fixed percentage of ballots would be chosen to audit regardless of whether the candidate won by 40% or 1%. Risk-limiting audits however look only at a statistically significant portion of the ballots based on the outcome of the election.

In the same scenario of a candidate winning by 40%, a smaller sample of ballots would need to be tested to determine the validity because the margin of victory is so high. Similarly, a closer election would require more ballots to be reviewed, allowing counties to conduct a more effective ballot count.

*"Principle and Best Practices for Post-Election Audits"*, a report endorsed by the Brennan Center for Justice, Common Cause, CTVotersCount.org, Verified Voting, the American Statistical Association, and several others, stated "Post-election audits reduce the risk of confirming an incorrect outcome. Audits designed explicitly to limit such risk (risk-limiting audits) have advantages over fixed-percentage or tiered audits, which often count fewer or more ballots than necessary to confirm the outcome."

The evolution of technology presents both opportunities and vulnerabilities. It is our responsibility to maintain a constant vigilance to protect the integrity of our elections. With these

audits in place, Ohioans can be sure that our state is leading the way in accurate and reliable elections results.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify this morning. I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.