



WRITTEN TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC SAFETY
COMMITTEE

PROPONENT TESTIMONY

HB 445

November 16, 2021

Chair Baldrige, Vice Chair McClain, Ranking Member Sheehy, and members of the House Transportation and Public Safety Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of HB 445, which makes critical updates to Ohio's 9-1-1 system across the state while maintaining local control of 9-1-1 operations.

The bill enables the much-needed modernization of Ohio's 9-1-1 services across the state by constructing a statewide next-generation 9-1-1 system, known as NG9-1-1, which would allow Ohioans to both make calls to and text 9-1-1 operators, improve access to the caller's location data, enable easier call transfers between jurisdictions and reduce the possibility of unanswered 9-1-1 calls.

Critically, HB 445 funds these upgrades through the existing 25-cent surcharge that is currently assessed each month on wireless service by extending the surcharge to all devices capable of calling 9-1-1, including landlines and voice over internet protocol (VOIP) services. Of the revenues from the surcharge, 47% would help local governments with the costs of upgrading systems to NG9-1-1. The remaining 53% would be allocated for the construction of the state's NG9-1-1 Core Services system and administrative fees.

The League appreciates Representatives Carfagna and Smith for their work on HB 445. Thank you for your consideration, and we urge for your favorable passage of this bill.

Sincerely,

Kent Scarrett
Executive Director
Ohio Municipal League