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HARAZ N. GHANBARI

State Representative | Ohio House District 3

24 May 2022

House Bill 531- Sponsor Testimony
Senate Committee
2022

Chair Gavarone, Vice Chair O'Brien, Ranking Member Maharath, and members of the Ohio Senate's Local Government and Elections Committee, thank you for the opportunity of providing sponsor testimony on House Bill 531. This legislation would provide Councils of Governments (COGs), Metropolitan Planning Organizations, and Regional Transportation Planning Organizations a chance to partner and obtain legal services at a lower cost by contracting with local county prosecuting attorneys.

As of now, these government entities are incapable of contracting with their county prosecution team for legal services. When matters of legal intervention are brought up, they are forced to seek private legal services and counsel thereby often becoming more expensive for our tax payers. By allowing these legal services to be provided to these entities by contract with the county prosecuting attorneys, these organizations would no longer be forced to pay variable rates when seeking legal counsel. Appropriately, to counter all costs that would be garnered from county prosecution for providing their legal counsel and services, prior agreed legal fees can be signed and paid by the contracting entities. This bill would be permissible providing that any legal services offered to such organizations would be at the discretion of the prosecutor and would require the approval of the Board of Commissioners of the county in which the prosecutor serves.

Numerous associations including but not limited to the Ohio County Prosecution Association, County Commission of Ohio and Ohio Association of Regional Councils have shown their resounding support for this bill. There has yet to be any objection nor neutrals on the legislation further solidifying its support and importance.

Pending any questions, this concludes my testimony in support of House Bill 531.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Haraz N. Ghanbari", is written over a blue circular stamp.

Haraz N. Ghanbari

Member of the Ohio House of Representatives