



## OHIO TOWNSHIP ASSOCIATION

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**Senate Bill 91 Regards fraud, waste, and abuse of public funds  
Proponent Testimony  
December 5, 2023  
House Government Oversight Committee**

Chairman Peterson, Vice Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Humphrey, and members of the House Government Oversight Committee, my name is Kyle Brooks and I am the Director of Governmental Affairs for the Ohio Township Association (OTA). I would like to offer our support of Senate Bill 91.

SB 91 creates a new standard for transparency and promotes good stewardship of taxpayer dollars. This legislation targets fraud by having the Auditor of State create training material to be distributed to new and existing public employees and officials across the state, and mandates reporting if fraud or abuse is suspected. The OTA was happy to see the fraud training requirement language included in the state operating budget earlier this year.

The OTA supports this transparency and is a standard we as an Association want the 1,308 townships to meet. The OTA believes the implementation of mandatory reporting will encourage employees to speak up earlier knowing the serious consequences of being silent. With a raised awareness any fraud hopefully will be caught early enough that it is less damaging to the subdivision otherwise.

We were disappointed to learn from Senator Schaffer's Senate sponsor testimony of a fraud violation that came from a township official. The OTA applauds and thanks the Auditor's office for catching the fraud, as one bad actor can spoil the reputation of the rest. The OTA has met with the Auditor of State's office to discuss the possible training material and have given our commitment to helping educate our members in any way deemed fit.

In a perfect world, no public official or employee would abuse public funds; that is a standard we all strive towards and the OTA believes this legislation is a step in that direction.

The OTA urges support of SB 91 and thanks Senator Schaffer for sponsoring and Auditor of State Keith Faber for crafting this legislation. If you have any questions or concerns about our position, please do not hesitate to contact me or OTA Executive Director Heidi M. Fought at 614-863-0045.

Sincerely,

Director of Governmental Affairs