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Tom Young
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Montgomery County

Committees

Chair Higher Education
Pensions
Finance
Joint Committee on Property Tax
Review and Reform
Health Provider Services

Chair Wiggam, Vice-Chair Dean, Ranking Member Brennan, and members of the State and Local Government Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on House Bill 491.

There can never be enough transparency between elected officials and their constituents to increase trust in the system. The Ohio Checkbook was created in 2015 to show taxpayers how their tax dollars were being spent by their state and local governments. Currently, participation in this program is optional by all local governments, school districts and taxing jurisdictions. As a result, only about 26% or 903 of the 3,420 municipalities, villages, townships, counties, school districts and special taxing districts have included their expenditures on this easy to access website. Even this data is incomplete as many of these entities have not continually used this program since its inception.

Our legislation would require any political subdivision which is defined as: a county, city, village, public library, township, park district, school district, regional water and sewer district, or regional transit authority, or state retirement system to provide expenditure information for inclusion in this database. They would also be required to display on its web site a prominent internet link to the Ohio state and local government expenditure database.

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Additionally, our legislation requires these political subdivisions to include their revenues on this site as well.

By providing this information we hope to improve trust between the taxpayer and their elected officials, increase transparency, and expand upon this important program. Thank you for your time, and we would be happy to answer any questions.