



OHIO SENATE FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE
March 21, 2023

Written Proponent Testimony
Senate Bill 50

Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Hackett, Ranking Member Smith, and members of the Ohio Senate Financial Institutions and Technology Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written proponent testimony regarding Senate Bill 50, which would make critical updates to Ohio's 9-1-1 system across the state while maintaining local control of 9-1-1 operations.

The Ohio Municipal League represents more than 730 cities and villages, and the work of emergency responders through their police and fire services continues to be a point of pride for them. More importantly, the pride stems from residents and visitors within these communities having reliable access to life-saving public safety services in their times of greatest need.

Senate Bill 50 would enable 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. This 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, SB50 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. We are also supportive of the surcharge to be raised to \$.70, as was recommended by the ESINet committee.

Under the bill, local jurisdictions have the option to join the statewide system or they can have or join an alternate ESINet and be connected to the statewide system to ensure transferability of 9-1-1 calls between jurisdictions. Jurisdictions that join the statewide system will have the added incentive of substantially lower costs than if they migrate with an alternate approach. We welcome this preservation of local decision making.

OML appreciates Senators Wilson and Smith for their work on SB50, which will further meet the needs of municipal safety forces and the residents they serve. Thank you for your consideration, and we urge for your favorable passage of this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. M. S.", written in a cursive style.

Executive Director
Ohio Municipal League