

4th House District

Parts of NE Franklin County
Including Gahanna, New Albany,
Westerville, Blacklick, Columbus, and
area townships



135th General Assembly Committees

Agriculture
Energy & Natural Resources
Higher Education
Pensions, Ranking Member
Primary & Secondary Education

Representative Mary Lightbody 4th House District

Testimony to the Senate Financial Institutions and Technology Committee
House Bill 74
December 4, 2023

Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Hackett, Ranking Member Smith, and members of the Senate Financial Institutions and Technology Committee, thank you for allowing Representative Hall and me to provide sponsor testimony for House Bill 74.

As described by Representative Hall in his testimony, there are several major parts to this legislation, all with the aim of collecting information about Information Technology (IT) practices in Ohio and the needs of our many state agencies and offices of statewide elected officials. I propose to add some of the rationale for the bill in my testimony today.

The purpose is to understand how best to modernize our practices, increase efficiencies, better handle the workload, reduce redundancies, improve user experiences, and control costs. The bill proposes to achieve these goals by having the State Chief Information Officer (Katrina Flory) and Deputy (Kristina Hagberg) determine how best to migrate the state's information technology systems to the State of Ohio Computer Center and to the state's cloud environment. They will get some help from the new Biannual Advisory Committee on State Information and Technology and from the new Cybersecurity and Fraud Advisory Board, which will be created when this bill is signed into law.

During testimony in the Technology and Innovation Committee in the 134th General Assembly, we learned about the many challenges that state agencies experience because their computer systems are hopelessly outdated, and procedures are often still paper based in an increasingly digital world. For example, Department of Commerce Director Sheryl Maxfeld spoke about the challenges her department faces. Her department has a number of dated technology issues, such as the unclaimed funds system, and over 100 IT projects which she estimated would require 13-18 years to complete with her current staff, funding, and equipment. She described how the pandemic exacerbated the issue especially with liquor and real estate licensing, much of which still relies on paper records and applications. The information on those applications has to be entered into state computers using state staff time. Those of us who were in the House during the height of the COVID pandemic heard from constituents and JFS staff members about the difficulties faced by the unemployment compensation system, due in part to outdated technology and systems.

HB 74 will start Ohio on a path to updating its computer systems and software, improving communication and collaboration between agencies, controlling costs for IT, improving cyber security, and preventing fraud.

If passed, HB74 will provide the data and information we need as legislators to augment the work of the Innovate Ohio Platform¹ created by Governor DeWine, currently lead by Lt. Governor Husted, which has started the effort to make state government in Ohio more effective and efficient while also improving customer service and saving tax dollars through the use of 21st century technology.

HB74 will help us prioritize the modernization of computer system, increase the security of data, and allow employees in our state agencies to communicate more easily with each other and improve the experiences of Ohioans with whom they interact.

HB 74 passed the House State and Local Government Committee and unanimously and was also unanimously passed on the floor of the House. There have not been any opponents along the way. I hope that you will agree that HB 74 will bring Ohio into the 21st century and will lay out a pathway to the upgrades and improvements that are long overdue.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this important piece of legislation. Along with Representative Hall, I would be happy to answer any questions the committee members may have.

¹ created by Governor DeWine in [Executive Order 2019-15D](#), called “Modernizing Information Technology Systems in State Agencies”