



Written Testimony  
Prepared for  
The Ohio House of Representatives  
State and Local Government Committee

Chairman Blair, Ranking Member Clyde and Members of the House State and Local Government Committee, thank you for this opportunity to share The Ohio Society of CPAs' (OSCPA) support for House Bill 175. We applaud Representative Mike Dovilla and State Treasurer Josh Mandel for their vision with regard to the creation of the Ohio State Government Expenditure Database.

We believe the database will make state government entities more accountable to the taxpayers who support them. This online checkbook will become a one-stop shop for those taxpayers seeking a clearer depiction of Ohio's financial ledger through each state entity's monthly reporting of expenditures issued to vendors. Transparency and accountability are important goals and will lead to efficiencies benefiting all Ohioans.

Some of you may recall OSCPAs Ohio Budget Advisory Task Force Report issued in 2010. A major emphasis was the reality that any enterprise, public or private, must be accountable to those who provide the means to keep it operating. In the private sector, shareholders must be confident that their investment in a company is being used efficiently and in a manner that will result in both short- and long-term success. An important way they can do so is by having access to independently verified data that is presented in a consistent manner. Taxpayers want that same level of confidence in the numbers shared by their government entities.

With Representatives Mike Duffey and Christina Hagan leading the charge at the local level with the DataOhio package of legislation (HB 321 – 324) and Congressman Jim Renacci's recent introduction of the Federal Financial Statement Transparency Act at the national level, enactment of HB 175 is the third integral piece to this puzzle. Instead of time-consuming, individual public records requests to get whatever information you need from government, the goal is to make it readily available at everyone's fingertips on the Internet.

We appreciate the time and attention this committee is giving to this important open-government proposal, and value the opportunity to support Ohio's effort to be at the forefront of data accessibility.