



Mid-Ohio Regional
Planning Commission

**Laura Koprowski, Director of Public & Government Affairs
Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission
Proponent Testimony – House Bill 5
Ohio Senate State Government & Oversight Reform Committee
September 30, 2015**

Chairman Coley, Vice Chairman Seitz, Ranking Member Yuko and members of the Senate State Government & Oversight Reform Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today about the benefits and importance of House Bill 5. This legislation will provide additional, needed tools to increase local government collaboration and also help reduce their costs in delivering services.

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission – also known as MORPC - is a voluntary association of more than 60 local governments and regional organizations in the 15-county Columbus Region. Our focus is on providing innovative programs, planning, and funding for our local communities and other regional partners. In recent years, we also prioritized assisting our local governments in exploring new ways to share services and create new efficiencies.

For several years, MORPC and the Educational Service Center of Central Ohio jointly ran the Central Ohio Regional Shared Services Steering Committee. The mission of the committee was to advise and coordinate regional shared services solutions among local governments and the education community that would leverage current and potential public capacities for the benefit of our taxpayers. I was proud to serve as the Committee's co-chair with the former Director of Franklin County Metro Parks John O'Meara. Our committee membership was diverse and broad from city managers to school superintendents to business chamber executives. As long as you were interested in exploring ways to increase services while reducing costs, you were welcome at our table. Our committee even tried to establish an online catalogue of shared services for our region but never achieved that goal. However, I

am so glad that Ohio Auditor Dave Yost and his team did achieve this vision for us with the ShareOhio program. I would even admit that ShareOhio goes beyond what our committee thought was possible.

MORPC is a ShareOhio participant and we have showcased the online program to our Board and during several other committee meetings with positive responses from our local government members. Sharing services among local governments and finding new, cost-saving ways to provide services to residents takes a variety of tools and methods. MORPC supports House Bill 5 and we believe there are two key provisions in the legislation that will allow more of our local governments to participate in ShareOhio and save tax payers dollars:

1. We are glad to see that HB5 addresses local governments' liability concerns with the ShareOhio program in order to increase participation in sharing heavy equipment resources among political subdivisions; and
2. Allowing a local public office to request that the auditor of state conduct a business case study to determine how such an office may achieve greater efficiency and provide funding to cover this beneficial service. As I have learned over the years working on shared services opportunities, this area takes thoughtful planning and analysis to be successful. Not all communities have the resources to go through this exercise but that should not prevent them from figuring out how to deliver better services at less cost to their residents and tax payers.

MORPC appreciates that House Bill 5 makes these improvements to the ShareOhio program. We believe these changes will increase local government participation in ShareOhio and, therefore, save public resources. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this meaningful legislation.

I am happy to answer any questions that you might have.