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**Ohio House Transportation and Public Safety Committee**  
House Bill 445 – Written Proponent Testimony

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Chairman Baldrige, Vice Chair McClain, Ranking Member Sheehy, and members of the House Transportation and Public Safety Committee, CCAO appreciates the opportunity to submit written proponent testimony on House Bill 445.

House Bill 445 would establish a process for providing the necessary funding to migrate Ohio's current 9-1-1 system that relies on the legacy carriers' wireline systems to an IP based Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) system that supports digital communications which will be operated across Ohio's OARNet system. This transition is necessary in order to utilize current and emerging technological advances in 9-1-1 system operations to better serve those in need of emergency response.

To fund this transition, the Statewide Emergency Services Internet Protocol Network Steering Committee (ESINet Committee) has recommended that a Universal Service Fee (USF) be established. A USF is a permanent, statewide, uniform monthly charge applied to all numbers/addresses capable of accessing 9-1-1 and is dedicated to funding Ohio's 9-1-1 system. Under HB 445, the USF would be established at 70 cents, with the ESINet Committee having limited ability to adjust the amount, provided that the fee does not exceed 70 cents.

The revenue from the USF is anticipated to fully fund the NG9-1-1 system. The replacement of county equipment with the centralized NG9-1-1 services provided by the state should also offset the costs of their diverse network connections and upgrades needed for migration to the State NG9-1-1 core services.

This legislation was brought forward upon the recommendation of the ESINet Committee by former Rep. Carfagna and Rep. Kent Smith. Passage of HB 445 will transition Ohio's 9-1-1 system into a system capable of responding to emergencies in the manner in which the public expects.

CCAO requests this committee's favorable consideration of HB 445 and its passage by the House.

