TESTIMONY ON
CONSOLIDATION OF STATE IT SYSTEMS (SB 482)

Presented to the Senate Communications and Technology Committee

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September 29, 2021

The County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP) is a non-profit, non-partisan association providing legislative, educational, insurance, research, technology, and similar services on behalf of all of the commonwealth's 67 counties.

We appreciate the opportunity offer our remarks on the consolidation of state IT systems. In the area of technology, CCAP provides a number of county programs focused on assisting counties with ensuring their technology services and solutions are secure, align with best practices, and meet the needs of county government. Our programs include IT CORE services where counties have access to IT templates and shared resources, and several statewide aggregate agreements for software licensing and cybersecurity resources. We also provide forums and other support for county IT professionals and GIS professionals.

Counties have multiple interfaces with state systems and databases, including the Statewide Uniform Registry of Electors (SURE) as well as shared reporting systems with the state across a variety of human services, land use, and other programs. These interfaces must help counties do their jobs, and also protect the data we hold, and it is important to recognize that all of these systemwide cybersecurity efforts also tie directly into supporting the counties. We have partnerships with multiple state agencies and are continuing to build and expand those good working relationships among the commonwealth's IT professionals and agencies, CCAP and the counties.

With that in mind, counties want to assure that any changes to the state's information technology infrastructure and organization going forward continues to support our collaborative and supportive relationship, as any changes to the state's systems will almost certainly impact the way in which counties interact with those systems and the steps we must take to keep county infrastructure secure. In addition, due to the rise in cybersecurity incidents, CCAP, counties and state agencies are already working together closely to improve security definitions and implement vital cybersecurity initiatives, including quarterly meetings, an annual cybersecurity conference, a self-assessment security toolkit and other projects.

As noted, counties take their responsibility to protect information seriously and want to implement the best possible cybersecurity standards. To that end, counties would like to see the creation of a multi-entity cybersecurity coordination board with county representation, which would allow for a more comprehensive approach to engaging stakeholders, strengthening the commonwealth's approach to privacy, protection, and cybersecurity.

Given the charge of the proposed Office of Information Technology under proposed legislation, including HB 40 and SB 482, which includes setting standards, procuring IT resources and facilitating the use of common technology, among other items, counties strongly encourage the General Assembly to add county representation to the Joint Cybersecurity Oversight Committee created under section 4354, which is designed to review and coordinate cyber security policies and emerging cyber security threats; work that is, as we noted, already taking place with various stakeholder entities. Therefore, it makes sense to prioritize this ongoing relationship between counties and the state and assure that counties have a seat in IT discussions in the future.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. We would be pleased to follow up on any questions you may have.