



**Ohio Department of Administrative Services
Multi-Agency Radio Communications System (MARCS) Steering Committee
Sunset Review Committee Testimony
August 28, 2024**

Chairman Wilkin, Vice-Chair Hillyer, and members of the Sunset Review Committee, my name is Angie Canepa, and I am the Deputy Director for First Responder Communications Initiatives at the Department of Administrative Services. I am pleased to appear before you today to testify in support of the Multi-Agency Radio Communications System (MARCS) Steering Committee. MARCS is a 700/800MHz radio and data network that provides a statewide, secure, and reliable communication system for public safety and first responders in Ohio.

The MARCS Steering Committee is an advisory body charged with providing assistance to the Director of Administrative Services for the effective and efficient implementation of MARCS as well as development of policies for the ongoing management of the system related to statewide interoperability for first responder communications. In the most recent operating budget, the legislature approved language expanding the membership of the committee to include legislators and additional public safety partners. This membership was renewed in the recently passed capital budget.

The Steering Committee is comprised of representation from our state agency customer partners which includes the Directors or their designees of the departments of Administrative Services, Public Safety, Natural Resources, Transportation, Rehabilitation and Correction, Office of Budget and Management, and the State Fire Marshal, as well as the chair of the local government subcommittee. The recently added members include a representative from the following: the Ohio Chapter of the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials, Buckeye State Sheriff's Association, Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police, Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association, two members from the House of Representatives, and two members from the Senate. This membership provides an effective governance model and solid representation of the first responder and public safety community.

The committee has no associated budget and members serve without compensation. Committee support amounts to less than 8 hours per meeting for two MARCS staff members.

Historically, the Steering Committee has met at least quarterly and on an as needed basis. The Steering Committee provides valuable advice and recommendations on policies and issues such as the recently completed system upgrade, local government adoption and rate development. The Steering Committee provides MARCS customers with direct influence in a service that is critical to

their mission and operations. The meetings are open to the public and are well attended by state and local government first responders.

Chairman Wilkin and members of the Committee, the MARCS Steering Committee continues to provide value and benefit to the public safety and first responder community and for this reason we recommend its reauthorization. It has been my pleasure to testify before you today in support of the MARCS Steering Committee. I thank you for your time this afternoon and would be happy to answer any questions you may have.