

TESTIMONY OF

Molly Herrington, Chief People Officer, Human Resource Management Services

Good afternoon, Chairman Longmuir and committee members. My name is Molly Herrington, Chief People Officer and Director of Human Resource Management Services (HRMS) Division of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). OMB opposes HB 1273.

This bill would have a negative impact on workplace culture, legal compliance, and organizational effectiveness.

This bill prohibits public sector policies limiting speech. While free speech is essential, workplaces must ensure a safe and respectful environment. Without clear policies, harmful speech could undermine morale, retention, and productivity.

Existing laws require employers to prevent harassment and discrimination. As this bill is written it would render void our policies related to speech. Some of these policies include sexual harassment, workplace conduct, and discrimination. Restricting policies against harmful speech could increase complaints and lawsuits, exposing public employers to legal and financial risks from hostile work environment lawsuits.

As public sector leaders, we must maintain the ability to set workplace standards that foster professionalism and collaboration. This bill weakens those efforts, creating challenges in workforce management.

I urge you to oppose HB 1273 to protect workplace integrity and employee well-being. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Chairman Longmuir and committee members, this concludes my testimony. I would be happy to answer any questions.