



OHIO CREDIT  
UNION LEAGUE

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**Credit unions work with Ohio legislature to protect members from cyberattacks**  
*Ohio Computer Crimes Act will combat electronic data theft, tampering, and manipulation.*

COLUMBUS – Ohio credit unions are constantly investing time and money on cybersecurity defenses. With the introduction and movement of House Bill 368 in the Ohio House of Representatives, they hope to further strengthen their ongoing efforts to protect their members' personal and private information.

House Bill 368, the Ohio Computer Crimes Act, was introduced by Representative Brian Baldrige (R-Winchester) late last year in response to an attempted breach at Desco Federal Credit Union in his district. While the credit union was prepared to prevent the breach, it was left with no recourse and was unable to prosecute the individual due to the lack of significant monetary damages inflicted. House Bill 368 migrates from the current damages-based model and creates new criminal code related to electronic data theft, tampering, and manipulation, making it easier to prosecute cases where a computer or computer network was intentionally used for malicious purposes.

“Although unfortunate that we were faced with an attempted hack into our system, we appreciate the opportunity to share our experience and bring attention to the threat of cyberattacks to all businesses and consumers,” said Desco Federal Credit Union CEO Lee Powell. “The Ohio Computer Crimes Act will provide necessary protection by modernizing and enhancing the law to punish those who knowingly, and with intent, use their computer skills to defraud or extort personal data.”

House Bill 368 was voted out of the House Criminal Justice Committee, where the Ohio Credit Union League and other organizations testified in support of the legislation, with unanimous support. The bill awaits a floor vote before the full Ohio House of Representatives.

“The damages-based model is not reflective of the harm caused to my local credit union and other businesses during an attempted breach,” explained Rep Brian Baldrige. “House Bill 368 recognizes new categories of cybercrime and extends a variety of stricter charges to help Ohio prosecutors swiftly prosecute cybercriminals without trying to prove and calculate damages using limited and outdated statutes.”

As cybercriminals worldwide grow more sophisticated, credit unions have mobilized around this and other bills to ensure they can continue to defend their members against malicious attacks and protect their business from the extreme damages that can result from such attacks.

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The Ohio Credit Union League, with offices in Columbus, is a state trade association representing 260 credit unions. Credit unions are not-for-profit financial institutions owned and democratically controlled by their members. Ohio credit unions provide savings, loans, and other consumer financial services to more than 3 million members.