



Ohio Adjutant General's Department

Mike DeWine, Governor

Major General John C. Harris Jr., Adjutant General

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For Immediate Release

Ohio takes another step toward strengthening cybersecurity

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Ohio is a step closer to creating the Ohio Cyber Reserve after the Ohio Senate voted to concur with changes made by the House of Representatives on Wednesday. The unanimous vote will send the legislation to the Governor for signature, forming the Ohio Cyber Reserve (OhCR).

[Senate Bill 52](#), sponsored by Sen. Theresa Gavarone, includes the establishment of a volunteer cyber force under the direction and supervision of the Ohio Adjutant General's Department, composed of trained, vetted Ohio civilians. The OhCR could be called to state active duty to respond to eligible small governments affected by cyberattacks.

"Similarly to how our National Guard is placed on state active duty during a natural disaster, the Governor will be able to call on the OhCR when there are not enough local resources to counter malicious cyberattacks on critical information technology infrastructure," said Maj. Gen. John C. Harris Jr., Ohio adjutant general. "These civilian cybersecurity experts will also be available to help small municipalities conduct vulnerability testing on their computer systems and provide recommendations to reduce cyber threats and enhance resiliency."

In anticipation of passage and approval from Gov. Mike DeWine, implementation plans are underway. OhCR teams will be based in five regions throughout the state. Members will be provided training, equipment, and credentials, and will work out of Ohio National Guard readiness centers. The budget allocations support at least one, 10-person team per region and can be expanded based on need, funding, and willing volunteers.

The OhCR will also have a cyber education mission to inform students about the inherent dangers of online activities. The OhCR will encourage ethical cyber-related activities and host interactive activities, such as cyber "capture the flag" competitions at high schools, colleges, and universities, to encourage interest in those fields of study.

The OhCR is an initiative born from an Adjutant General's Department partnership with more than 200 representatives from public, private, military, and educational organizations that make up the Ohio Cyber Collaboration Committee (OC3). The OC3 mission is to provide a collaborative environment to develop a stronger cybersecurity infrastructure and workforce in the state.

Another of the committee's initiatives is the development of the Ohio Cyber Range — a virtual environment used for cybersecurity training and technology development. The cyber range is being implemented in stages to allow it to grow as Ohio's cyber capabilities increase, with current sites at the University of Cincinnati and the University of Akron.

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