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# OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

Office of Research  
and Drafting

Legislative Budget  
Office

H.B. 177  
134<sup>th</sup> General Assembly

## Bill Analysis

[Click here for H.B. 177's Fiscal Note](#)

**Version:** As Reported by House Technology and Innovation

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Carfagna and Fraizer

Christopher Edwards, Attorney

### SUMMARY

- Allows governmental entities to use distributed ledger technology, including blockchain technology.

### DETAILED ANALYSIS

#### Governmental use of distributed ledger technology

Under the bill, a governmental entity may use distributed ledger technologies, including blockchain technology, in the exercise of its authority.<sup>1</sup>

“Distributed ledger technology” is not defined in the bill; generally, a distributed ledger is a completely decentralized digital database that is shared and maintained by each individual computer on a network. Put another way, distributed ledger technology is a very specific kind of recordkeeping technology in which each user has an up-to-date copy of a digital database, and there is not a centrally kept “official” version. A distributed ledger is useful for recording certain types of information, such as transactions or changes in ownership without the need for a central authority to verify the information.<sup>2</sup>

Under the bill, a “**governmental entity**” means the state or a political subdivision, both of which are also defined. “**State**” means the state of Ohio and includes:

- The General Assembly;
- The Supreme Court;

<sup>1</sup> R.C. 9.16(B).

<sup>2</sup> Shawn S. Amual, Josias N. Dewey, and Jeffrey R. Seul, *The Blockchain: A Guide for Legal & Business Professionals*, § 1:2 (2016).

- The offices of all elected state officers; and
- All departments, boards, offices, commissions, agencies, colleges and universities, institutions, and other instrumentalities of the state.

A “**political subdivision**” is a municipal corporation, township, county, school district, or any other body corporate and politic that is responsible for government activities in a geographic area smaller than the state. The definition includes a long list of specific examples, such as county hospitals, but those examples do not limit the definition’s reach.<sup>3</sup>

For a more in-depth description of distributed ledger technology and blockchain technology, see the LSC *Members Only* Brief, [Blockchain Technology and Virtual Currency](#). In addition to the preceding hyperlink, it can be found at [www.lsc.ohio.gov](http://www.lsc.ohio.gov), under “Popular Publications.”

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## HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	03-04-21
Reported, H. Technology and Innovation	04-15-21

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<sup>3</sup> R.C. 9.16(A), by reference to R.C. 9.48 and 2744.01, not in the bill.