Transparency Nomination:

A. Cover page
- Title: Ohio Government Transparency
- Category: Open Government Initiatives
- State: Ohio

B. Executive Summary

The past several years have seen increasing constituent expectations of accountability and transparency backed up by hard data in government operations. As a result, Ohio has engaged in legislative and executive initiatives, with the intent to make State government operations more easily understood by the public.

The output of a collaborative effort among State agencies and the Governor's Office, Transparency.Ohio.gov launched with State employee data and grants information and tied in ongoing efforts to make available information regarding regulatory rule reviews, real estate, procurement, budget, and tax incentives for businesses.

Since going live, Transparency.Ohio.gov has incorporated the business rule-making process and economic development tax incentives. As an aggregator of open government initiatives and data, Transparency.Ohio.gov will continue to expand and incorporate new content as it becomes available in order to fulfill its mission as a one-stop shop for open government in Ohio. Currently, the following information can be found by visiting Transparency.Ohio.gov:

- State grant awards
- Procurement opportunities and contracts
- Underutilized state land and buildings
- Agency spending on in-state businesses
- State employment levels and use of overtime
- State employee pay
- State budgeting and funding of state programs
- Business regulatory rule reviews
- Economic development tax incentives awarded to businesses

The Transparency project has made many data sets easily accessible to the public for the first time, and brought existing data sets into a single portal that will be able to expand as new data sets become available.

The primary beneficiaries of the Transparency project are Ohio citizens and businesses, both as customers and as taxpayers. Through its many functions, Transparency.Ohio.gov provides these stakeholders with greater ability to participate in government processes, see process outcomes and review government spending than ever before.

C. Description of the Business Problem and Solution:

The past several years have seen increasing constituent expectations of accountability and transparency backed up by hard data in government operations. Ohio now makes robust data sets easy to find and worth finding so that more government information is publicly accessible to the public.

The Transparency.Ohio.gov project was able to capitalize on many existing efforts to make government more open:

- Ohio House Bill 420 sought to make Government grants information available.

- Ohio House Bill 1 sought to make economic development tax incentives to businesses available.

- Executive Order 2008-04S sought to make the business rule-making process more open and interactive. Executive Order 2011-01K affirms and reinforces this principle.

- Ohio's efforts to communicate American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (ARRA) activities were influenced by Recovery.gov and NASCIO guidance; these included making the stimulus funding process transparent.

The initiatives above prescribed posting government data online. In addition, the project team identified other open government initiatives and reached out to the provider agencies for inclusion on Transparency.Ohio.gov.

Bringing together data from many different sources required a collaborative effort among the Governor's Office, state agencies and the enterprise portal team. The collaborative approach allowed each contributing organization to focus on its strengths. The agencies focused on the best way to present their data and processes online, and the enterprise portal team focused on aggregating the data into a one-stop shop. The project team was made up of internal state agency and Governor's Office resources; there was no additional spending or project budget outside of staff time.

The solution deliverable was Transparency.Ohio.gov, an online one-stop shop for the state's efforts to conduct business in an open and transparent manner. Transparency.Ohio.gov has been in production for 18 months as an aggregator of open government initiatives and data; it brings together the following functions:

1. **State Grants**. Transparency.Ohio.gov provides links to 18 agency grants information pages, as well as contact information, including name, email and phone number for each grants page. The agency grants pages

provide listings and searchable databases for recipient information, including name, amount awarded, amount paid and location.

2. **State Procurement**. Ohio's procurement website is managed by the Department of Administrative Services (DAS). It provides businesses and citizens with information to find opportunities to sell to the state and search for the outcomes of awarded contracts. A procurement scorecard shows how much agency spending goes to in-state companies.

3. **State Properties**. The Treasurer of State maintains an inventory of approximately 50,000 parcels of underutilized state buildings and land. These properties are made available for businesses and government entities.

4. **State Employees**. The Department of Administrative Services provides state employment data. Visitors can look up State employee gross pay. In addition, visitors can also track state agency use of overtime and see trends of employee counts by agency.

5. **State Budget**. The Office of Budget and Management provides information on the state budget, including operating and capital budget overviews, and explanations of why programs are funded.

6. **Regulatory Reform**. The Ohio Business Gateway allows visitors to track and comment on rules that are being proposed or reviewed by Ohio's 13 business-regulating agencies. An e-Notification feature enables users to subscribe to email alerts notifying them when rules come up for review.

7. **Tax Incentives**. The Department of Development provides a searchable database of economic development tax incentives which allows taxpayers to review tax incentives issued by the State to Ohio companies.

8. **Contact Form**. Any constituent can make a suggestion or ask a question.

D. Significance of the Project:

The Transparency project aligns with multiple legislative and executive initiatives, all of which aim to make government open and more transparent. House Bill 1 requires the state to post state employee salaries online and business tax incentives online. Regulatory reform continues to be a priority of the Governor's Office, which requires that rules must be available online for search and comment by all constituents.

House Bill 420 requires online posting of information on state awards and earmarks, state real property management, state agency management and state program effectiveness. HB 420 was modeled after the Federal Funding, Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006. The purpose of the legislation is to create a more open government environment resulting in greater accountability and transparency by allowing citizens and businesses to monitor their state's government.

The primary beneficiaries of the Transparency project are Ohio citizens and businesses, both as customers and as taxpayers. Through its many functions, Transparency.Ohio.gov provides these stakeholders with the opportunity to participate in government processes, see process outcomes and review government spending.

E. Benefit of the Project:

The primary benefit of the Transparency project is its ability to improve engagement and goodwill with Ohio citizens and businesses by allowing them to track government spending.

This effort does more than satisfy legislative and executive mandates; it accomplishes open government goals that benefit constituents. It also aligns with NASCIO's State CIO priority strategy for open government.

The Transparency project has made many data sets available to the public for the first time, and brought existing data sets into a single new platform: Transparency.Ohio.gov. As a result, Ohio citizens and businesses have greater ability to monitor government processes and spending than ever before.