Heavy filing season showcases improved strength of Ohio Business Gateway

COLUMBUS — Ohio Department of Administrative Services (DAS) Director Matt Damschroder today announced the Ohio Business Gateway (OBG) displayed significant improvements in performance throughout 2019, and especially during January’s business-tax filing season. This is a dramatic improvement over the 2019 filing period, during which the system experienced substantial issues in the balancing and reconciliation of payments.

The Ohio Business Gateway is a one-stop website for Ohio businesses to interact with State government, where users register, file, and pay various types of taxes and conduct other transactions.

“Last year’s efforts to stabilize the system have paid off, resulting in a smooth filing process for businesses and timely data transfers to local government partners,” said Damschroder. “The stabilization of the Gateway, coupled with additional enhancements, is making doing business in Ohio easier than ever.”

In January, more than 960,000 transactions, totaling $1.9 billion, were processed through the Gateway, which is administered by DAS. Throughout the last year, there was a four percent increase in filings and a 10 percent increase in dollars collected. The system showed considerable improvements when comparing data from January 2019 to January 2020. Some of the improvements include:

- Over the past year, the average time to transmit data files to state and local partners was decreased by an average of four hours
- The busiest filing days had decreased transmittal wait times of more than 24 hours in January 2019. That number fell to 7.5 hours in January 2020
- Calls to the help desk decreased by 74 percent
- Online help cases are down 38 percent

Following numerous system issues and complaints in January 2019, Damschroder directed his department to postpone planned enhancements, and instead concentrate on stabilizing the system’s basic filing functions. After determining the causes of the issues, DAS took action to optimize hardware, make code improvements, and conduct performance testing. The agency also emphasized identifying and addressing issues earlier.

Ohio Tax Commissioner Jeff McClain, whose department is the biggest user of the Gateway, praised the focus on customer experience. Customer experience is a core component of the DeWine Husted Administration’s InnovateOhio initiative, led by Lt. Governor Jon Husted. InnovateOhio’s secure sign-on technology is also an integral part of the Ohio Business Gateway.

“For both the Department of Taxation and all of our business customers, the Gateway is a critical channel for conducting core business functions,” he said. “The system is proving it’s stable and reliable,
and we’re excited about the enhancements, including the new online submission of W-2s.” Prior to recent enhancements, employers submitted W-2 forms to Taxation via mailed-in compact discs.

Another enhancement to the Ohio Business Gateway includes the ability for users to now securely save multiple payment options. This is particularly helpful for businesses, such as accounting firms, that conduct transactions on behalf of multiple clients. In addition, an auto-fill payment option speeds the transaction and reduces the likelihood of errors from manual entry.

“We are grateful to the Ohio Department of Administrative Services for including our members in the testing process,” said Greg Saul, Director of Tax Policy with the Ohio Society of CPAs. “We want to continue efforts in making the OBG much easier for accounting firms to manage transactions for a multitude of clients.”

Members of the Society participated in user testing, helping to validate the ease and convenience of the new process.

###

_DAS is the hub of State government, working behind the scenes to deliver innovative services and solutions that support the operation of State agencies, boards, and commissions._

Office of Communications • 30 East Broad Street • Columbus, Ohio 43215 • das.ohio.gov

The State of Ohio is an equal opportunity employer.