

***Chairman Manning, Ranking Member Celebrezze, and members of the House Criminal Justice Committee, thank you for providing me with the opportunity to present sponsor testimony on House Bill 607. This legislation will eliminate the requirement that one of the judges of the Wayne County Municipal Court sit within the municipal corporation of Orrville.***

***The existing statute was adopted several years prior to the building of a new Municipal Courthouse in Wooster and long before The Court implemented electronic filing. Although I do not know all the reasons for the prior legislation, I assume that space for holding court, office space for the Judges and their staff, and offices for the Clerk of Courts, and Prosecutors was part of the reasoning. Also as a convenience of Attorneys and Law enforcement in the eastern part of the county. The new Courthouse was built in 2002 and provides more than adequate space for holding court and staffing of all offices, and is centrally located in Wayne County.***

***Since that time, we have transported court staff from Wooster to Orrville two or three times per week to hold court there in order to obey the current ORC statute. This includes Judges, Magistrates, Clerk of Courts staff, Bailiffs, Judges staff and Security personnel which at times leaves all of these entities short staffed at the Wooster Courthouse.***

***The courts in Wayne County implemented a new case management/document management system in 2014. Our files are now paperless and allows for the filing of court documents 24/7 through our website. Waiverable traffic citations may also be paid online. Case files, including documents, are also available online thus eliminating many occasions for physical trips to the Courthouse.***

***The proposed legislation has been communicated to the local Bar Association and the various law enforcement agencies in the county. There was also an article in the local newspaper and we have received no negative feedback from any of the above entities or the community at large.***

***While the proposed legislation would remove the mandate to hold court in both cities it would still allow us to hold court in Orrville, if and when it is needed.***

***We respectfully request that you pass this legislation to help us improve the efficiency of our Municipal Court.***

***Thank you.***

***Sincerely,***

***Tim Neal***

***Wayne County Clerk of Courts***

