

April 25, 2017

From: Kathleen O. Webb
11551 Wilbert Road
Munson, Ohio 44024
440 – 286 – 5326

Legislation: HB 49 Budget Bill
Specific Issue: HC 1793
Subject Matter: County Park Districts and Probate Court

Representing myself, I oppose the enactment of legislation regarding this issue.

To: Ohio House Finance Committee
Chairman Smith, Vice Chair Ryan, Ranking Member Cera

Dear Honorable Representatives,

Thank you for allowing this opportunity to present testimony on HC 1793, a proposed amendment to HB 49, the State Budget Bill.

I respectfully request that HC 1793 be removed from HB 49.

I oppose this amendment based upon clear and simple reasons:

- This amendment does not pertain to the State Budget, the Budget Bill is not the appropriate vehicle for this subject matter;
- The amendment would improperly and unnecessarily expand the powers of a probate judge over a county park district;
- This amendment is not needed to ensure the proper management and functioning of a county park district;
- The amendment would give sole discretion to a Probate Judge to declare a group or individual to be “interfering” with the mission of a county park -- this declaration would not be based upon law, but rather on the whim of the Probate Judge, who would also be the sole decider of fines and punishments;
- It is undemocratic to put such power in the hands of one person, and would compromise the separation of powers;
- The amendment, if enacted, would have a chilling effect on public comment and participation in matters pertaining to county parks, violating the First Amendment;
- This poorly conceived amendment would create the unfortunate opportunity and probability of exploitation by a probate judge for political or personal reasons.

Thank you kindly for your time and attention.

Kathleen O. Webb