



Rep Richard Brown
Sponsor Testimony House Bill 261

Chairman Hambley, Vice Chair Patton, and members of the Civil Justice Committee, thank you for giving me the opportunity to offer sponsor testimony on HB 261, to amend sections 2301.02 and 2301.03 of the Ohio Revised Code to specify that the newly created domestic relations seat of the Franklin County Common Pleas Court to be elected in November 2021 will take office on January 3, 2021, rather than January 2, 2021.

As Franklin County has grown over the years, so has its need for Common Pleas Court judges. Additional judgeships for the Franklin County Common Pleas Court were added many times over the years, in 1954, 1956, 1958, 1968, 1976, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1996, and 2004. Further, two new judgeships for the Domestic Relations Division of the Franklin County Common Pleas Court were recently created, with one seat to be elected in November 2018 for a term commencing on 1/09/19, and the other seat to be elected in November 2020 for a term originally set to commence on 1/02/21. LSC previously drafted amendments to R.C. 2301.02 and 2301.03 indicating that the term of the second new Domestic relations seat was to commence on 1/02/21. However, the seat on the Franklin County Common Pleas Court which was previously

created to be elected in 1996 with a term to commence on 1/02/97, has subsequent terms commencing every six years thereafter, or, on 1/02/03, 1/02/09, 1/02/15, and 1/02/21.

Consequently, the second new Domestic Relations seat on the Franklin County Common Pleas Court, to be elected in November 2020, cannot start on 1/02/21 as set forth in the current version of R.C. 2301.02 and 2301.03, without directly conflicting with the start date of the other judicial seat previously created to be first elected in 1996. This drafting decision must be changed so that the start date of the term of the second new Domestic Relations judgeship in Franklin County shall be January 3, 2021, as January 2, 2021 is already the start date for the term of the judgeship of the Franklin County Common Pleas Court previously created and first elected in 1996. In order to avoid electoral confusion and to avoid possible problems, it is necessary to correct R.C. 2301.02 and 2301.03 to reflect the revised start date of the second new domestic relations judgeship in the Franklin County Common Pleas Court.

I was asked to sponsor this bill by Ed Leonard, the Director of the Franklin County Board of Elections, who is present in the hearing room today. There are only two minor changes that are necessary. The first appears on page 9 of the bill, line 227, and the second appears on page 12 of the bill, line 322. Both technical corrections entail merely changing the start date of the Franklin County Common Pleas Domestic Relations judgeship commencing in 2021 from January 2 to January 3, 2021.

Thank you Mr. Chairman, Vice Chair Patton, and Members of the Civil Justice Committee for allowing me to offer sponsor testimony on this matter. I will be happy to take any questions you may have.

