

## 35th House District

Summit County

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## Committees

Civil Justice  
Criminal Justice  
Higher Education  
Co-Chair, Criminal Sentencing  
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## Tavia Galonski State Representative

Chairman Becker, Vice Chair Stoltzfus, and Ranking Member Miller, thank you for allowing me and my joint sponsor, Representative Smith, to provide sponsor testimony for House Bill 475.

This legislation aims to keep our elections transparent and honest by requiring candidates for president and vice president to include their federal income tax returns in their candidacy filings submitted to the Secretary of State. Furthermore, the Secretary of State would be required to publish those tax returns within seven days of submission.

As the leader of our country, the President of the United States ought to be held to the highest possible standard. With the invisible primary stage of the election cycle moving earlier each cycle, Presidential candidates ultimately are vetted by their peers, the media, and the public. Asking presidential candidates to disclose five years worth of income tax returns is not an outrageous request. This legislation is simply codifying part of the vetting process to ensure that candidates have fulfilled their obligation to the tax payer prior to appearing on the ballot.

If a person cannot follow through with their obligation to contribute to our schools, roads, and other societal goods, then they have already demonstrated that they are unfit to lead our country. During campaign cycles there is rigorous reporting when it comes to who contributed money and where that money was spent. The entire premise behind campaign finance laws is to make campaign spending transparent to the public and put pressure on candidates to use their monies within ethical confines. We have already determined that having a record of campaign spending is necessary to ensure a fair election process. By adding the disclosure of income tax returns we are expanding on the pre-established idea that it is important to see where a politician's money is coming and going.

Chairman Becker, Vice Chair Stoltzfus, and Ranking Member Miller, thank you for allowing me and my joint sponsor, Representative Smith, to provide sponsor testimony today. I am happy to answer any questions the committee may have.