

**DRAFT**

Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee.  
Thank you, for allowing me to present proponent  
testimony on House Bill 354.

In Seneca County we have been proactive  
in combating the opioid crisis and epidemic. We  
first created an opiate addiction task force in  
2015. This task force meets monthly. Its  
membership includes individuals from:

Seneca County General Health District  
Seneca County Job & Family Services  
Adult Parole Authority  
Seneca County Prosecutor's Office  
Seneca County Drug Task Force Tiffin-  
Fostoria Municipal Court Seneca County  
Common Pleas Court Seneca County  
Sheriff's Office  
Tiffin Police Department  
Firelands Counseling & Recovery Services  
Oriana House  
Fostoria Police Department Seneca  
County Commissioners

Religious/Spiritual profession  
Medical profession  
And other citizens.

This task force has been aggressive in its approach to this crisis. One part of this aggressive approach is to create a multi-jurisdictional drug recovery program.

This request does not create a new Court but rather a program. Hopefully, the funding for this program will be a Justice Reinvestment Incentive Grant from the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction.

The Judges for the Municipal Court and the Common Pleas Court have realized that the opioid crisis in rural counties involves the same issues, the same controlled substances and many times the same people. Combining our resources and our expertise allows the Courts to address these issues much more effectively and efficiently.

The PIVOT Drug Recovery program will include all accepted drug offenders regardless if their drug charges are misdemeanors or felonies. H.B. No. 354 provides the trial Courts in Seneca County the opportunity to properly address the issues involved with drug offenders. Since the trial Courts will be all housed in the new Seneca County Justice Center, the creation of one drug recovery program makes good common sense.

On behalf of the Seneca County Opiate Addiction Task Force and the Judges of Seneca County, we ask for your support and your approval of H.B. No. 354.

Thank you.