

Chairman Bacon, Vice Chair Dolan, Ranking Member Thomas, and Members of the 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.

The funding for this program has been granted via 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 (opening in a couple weeks), 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.