

Opposition Written Testimony Re: HB 488

Written on March 7, 2022

Witness: Kenneth E. Radke, Jr

Chesterland, Ohio 44026

To: Chairman Hillyer and members of the Ohio House of Representatives Civil Justice Committee

Please accept this written electronic communication as my position on H.B. 488.

To begin, do you find it strange that a state representative who happens to be the wife of a sitting county probate judge is seeking to expand the spending authority of the very court her husband oversees? Do you find it even stranger that the same state representative who is a proponent of this language reducing the authority for financial oversight by a county auditor is also seeking to become the county auditor?

I believe this proposed language is meant to bypass the legitimate role of other county elected officials serving as a checks and balances on one another. This proposed change would greatly inhibit the ability and legitimate duty of the Auditor's office to protect taxpayer dollars and question expenditures, further reducing the People's faith in government.

I am not in opposition to the majority of the content of HB 488 as introduced. I do oppose the language in House Bill 488 regarding the authority for courts to engage legal counsel and unilaterally incur debt on county funds. Justification for legal fees should be subject to approval by either a county auditor, perhaps a county budget commission, or some other mechanism that ensure checks and balances are in place.

Based on history and experience, providing an 'open checkbook' for the courts (or any government entity) only increases the likelihood of abuse of taxpayer dollars, and I strongly urge you to remove that language from HB 488.

Respectfully,

Kenneth E. Radtke, Jr.

12865 Sperry Rd.

Chesterland, OH 44026

216-926-8883

enviroguide@prodigy.net

Emailed to: Braden Watkins @ Braden.Watkins@ohiohouse.gov