

Testimony of Christine Monday in of HJR No.1

(January, 2022)

Chairman Wiggam, Vice Chairwoman John , Ranking Member Kelly, and Members of the Committee.

My name is Christine Monday. I have lived in Toledo, Ohio, Lucas County most of my life. I am a retired Spanish and English teacher with a wide variety of experiences, teaching every level from pre-school, through high school & university, and Medical and Business Spanish. .

I have had the opportunity visit, study, live in, or teach in 13 different countries. These experiences gave me the opportunity to “get inside the culture” in ways that a tourist would not have. I could see the influences of various economic and political systems in the daily lives of the people. In Cuba I witnessed remnants of a once flourishing economy now reduced to shambles since its conversion to Communism. In Guatemala I saw a country that never had flourished (since the conquista) under a series of corrupt dictatorships. In China, the government’s use of fear and centralized power controlled every aspect of society, telling people where they could live, cutting off media access to all outside ideas and influences, even dictating how many children a family was allowed to have. I have witnessed the devastating effects of dictatorships, abuse of power, and rampant corruption in many countries, especially in Latin America. Some places like Chile, Venezuela, and Argentina had once fared better than some other places like Guatemala, Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay or Nicaragua. But as these countries gradually (some suddenly) moved towards socialism, managed by a strong central government, they have suffered devastating economic consequences, and the people have lost many of their freedoms..

Costa Rica is an exception. Once the poorest country in Central American, with political power concentrated in a dictator and the military like its neighbors, Costa Rica completely changed course. A new constitution was written, modeled after the constitution of the United States. The power of the military was replaced by a democracy that transformed the country. It now has a large middle class, a stable economy, access to good quality medical care, and currently has a higher literacy rate than the US. This is not a country without any problems, but its transformation speaks powerfully to support the wisdom of our founders in creating a constitution with checks and balances of power between the branches of government and the guarantee of freedom for the people.

I have been watching this country move in a direction that alarms me, as power has become increasingly concentrated in a federal government with an obvious socialist agenda. In every country where I have seen socialism, a dictatorship, one-party or military rule, there has resulted abuse of power, rampant corruption, economic ruin, and loss of personal freedoms for the people. I urge you to support Ohio’s participation in a Convention of States to discuss just and fair ways of addressing this increasing concentration of federal power and preserve the personal freedoms our founders intended for us to have.

Thank you for taking time to listen to our concerns.

Sincerely, Christine Monday