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**Ohio General Assembly  
Ohio House of Representatives  
Representative Jim Hoops**

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Chairman Manning, Vice-Chair McColley, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee thank you for allowing me to provide sponsor testimony on HB 518. HB 518 would allow the court system in Fulton County to change from a County Court made up of two part time judges to a Municipal Court that would have one full time judge. This legislation was brought to me and Senator McColley by the local officials of Fulton County.

This bill would allow Fulton County to establish a Municipal Court effective 1/1/2024. It would also establish the continuation of a branch court in Wauseon, OH and Swanton, OH. The judge would sit in each location on a weekly basis. In both branch offices there will continue to be a full time special deputy clerk to administer the branch office. Although this has been discussed for many years the reason for this happening now is due to one of the County Court Judges retiring.

However, due to election laws for a Municipal Judge the election would not take place until 2023 so the one remaining single County Court Judge would oversee the County Court until the end of 2023. This legislation has the support of all elected officials in the County which includes the Judges, the County Commissioners and the Prosecutor. This legislation has also been approved by the County Bar Association and supported by the City of Wauseon and the Village of Swanton. This legislation is also supported by the Ohio Supreme Court.

I ask for your support for this legislation that I feel will benefit the residents of Fulton County and I am happy to answer any questions.