



## Ohio Clerk of Courts Association

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December 6, 2022

Chairman Manning, Vice Chair McColley, Ranking Member Thomas and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

I am Branden Meyer, the Fairfield County Clerk of Courts and Co-Chair of the Ohio Clerk of Courts Association's Legislative Committee. I am here today to testify in support of House Bill 567, which would require the clerk of the court of common pleas to make the court's civil docket, including documents and images of each case file, available on the clerk of court's web site.

I would like to start off by thanking the bill sponsor, Representative Brian Stewart, for working closely with the OCCA during the drafting of this legislation. He was extremely amenable to our feedback and suggestions, and we appreciate his openness throughout the process.

By way of background, of Ohio's eighty-eight (88) county clerks of court:

- Forty-three (43) counties post their docket online, including posting relevant images online;
- Forty-three (43) counties post their docket online, however without including images; and,
- Two (2) counties do not post their docket or images online.

While Forty-three (43) counties are already compliant with the requirements of the bill today, the OCCA appreciates the additional time provided in the bill to allow the remaining forty-five (45) counties to work with their technology vendors and prepare their offices to move all civil dockets and images online.

I would also like to express the OCCA's support of several amendments to be considered today by this committee, including:

- Clarifying that individual county clerks of court cannot be held liable for any confidential information disclosed in a filing made online; and,
- Specifying that when pleadings or documents are received, created or converted to an electronic format, that format is considered the official version of the record.

The remaining amendments are purely "clean-up" and update the Ohio Revised Code to recognize what is required by the Ohio Supreme Court's Rules of Superintendence and in practice. The "clean up" amendments include:

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| <b>Tracy Zuver</b><br><i>President</i><br>Fulton County | <b>Calvin Freeman</b><br><i>1<sup>st</sup> Vice President</i><br>Mercer County | <b>Deborah Myers</b><br><i>2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President</i><br>Ashland County | <b>Olivia Parkinson</b><br><i>3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President</i><br>Licking County | <b>Ronda Steimel</b><br><i>Corresponding Secretary</i><br>Holmes County | <b>Natalie Favel</b><br><i>Recording Secretary</i><br>Delaware County | <b>Ann Dunbar</b><br><i>Treasurer</i><br>Wyandot County |
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- Removing the requirement that clerks of court keep at least four books and comply with the standards prescribed by the National Bureau of Standards;
- Aligning the requirements for recording orders made out of the court with the Ohio Supreme Court's Rules of Superintendence;
- Aligning the clerk of court requirements related to record keeping and maintenance of records with the Ohio Supreme Court's Rules of Superintendence; and,
- Replacing the specific list of items required to be provided to the board of county commissioners to the clerk of court of common pleas with more general language.

I would also like to note that the Ohio Supreme Court and County Commissioners Association of Ohio are supportive of the amendment language pertaining to them.

Again, we want to thank Representative Stewart for his partnership as he worked through the details and nuances of our offices and technology capabilities, and we are happy to lend our support.

I am happy to answer any questions.

Branden Meyer  
Fairfield County Clerk of Courts