



OHIO NEWS MEDIA ASSOCIATION | 1335 DUBLIN ROAD, SUITE 216-B | COLUMBUS OH 43215  
MONICA NIEPORTE, PRESIDENT & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## **Testimony of Monica Nieporte**

*Ohio News Media Association*

House Bill 567 – Court of Common Pleas Documents

### **Senate Judiciary Committee**

Chairman Manning, Vice Chair McColley, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of House Bill 567, sponsored by State Representatives Brian Stewart and Richard Brown. This is a pro-transparency piece of legislation that will ensure all Ohioans have equal access to the records and activities of their local courts.

As you know, HB 567 generally requires each clerk of courts to make the general docket available online within 18 months of the effective date of the bill. Many common pleas courts already have case files posted and easily searchable online. This bill would ensure that reporters and citizens alike will have uniform access to court records and proceedings.

The ability to access court records online dramatically improves the ability of our reporters to accurately and efficiently report on notable cases in their communities. It is no secret that our industry is struggling and there are simply fewer reporters covering the news across the state. HB 567 will allow us to continue providing quality coverage of activity at the county courthouse.

HB 567 has received overwhelming support from organizations representing clerks of court, judges, and lawyers; it passed the Ohio House of Representatives with a strong bipartisan majority and represents sound public policy. I urge your favorable consideration of this important legislation before the 134<sup>th</sup> General Assembly concludes.