

**OPPOSITION TESTIMONY SB 21
SUBMITTED BY ANDREA R. YAGODA
HOUSE CIVIL JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

Chair Hillyer, Vice Chair Mathews, Ranking member Galonski and members of the House Civil Justice Committee. Thank you for affording me the opportunity to speak against SB 21. My name is Andrea R. Yagoda and I have been a resident of the state of Ohio for 49 years. This Bill raises several concerns for me. The fact that Mr. McColley is the sponsor of the bill makes me suspect right off the bat since he was the author of a gerrymandered Senate map in violation of the Ohio Constitution and second he sat on the Redistricting Commission and blatantly chose to violate an order from the Ohio Supreme Court.

I see this bill as another avenue for even more corruption than we have seen as a result of the Householder fiasco. There is no "public bidding" for legal services; there is no oversight, no limit to how much the fees can be. There is no prohibition that any law firm including the individual members, their spouses, family members, etc hired cannot contribute to the campaigns of the Governor, Speaker nor Senate President. As a taxpayer I am appalled that yet again we are asked to pay the bill when the Attorney General was elected by the people to defend against lawsuits where the State has an interest. The grasp for power has no limits. Obviously it is not enough for the Senate President and Republicans in the statehouse that they voted to allow themselves the retention of private counsel to fight against fair maps even though Ohioans voted overwhelmingly for fair maps. We, the taxpayer were forced to pay the attorney fees of those who

sought to void our votes now they want to insert themselves whenever they feel like it into the judicial process thereby obliterating the separation of powers.

This bill sets no limits on the amounts to be expended by the taxpayer for these individuals to insert themselves in litigation; leaves it to the sole discretion of the Governor, Speaker and/or Senate President when to do so with no oversight especially since these parties can claim attorney client privilege to avoid any transparency.

This bill will also lead to more “forum sopping” and make it harder for agencies to pursue cases.

I wish I had the time to be more specific but I do not and just wanted to make sure my objections were noted. This bill is nothing more than a grab for more power into every branch of our government. One more step to an autocracy.

This committee should vote no on this bill.

Andrea R. Yagoda