

Nicholas A. Iarocci
Judge
Telephone (440) 593-7410

Julie Myers
Clerk
Telefax (440) 593-6402

Conneaut Municipal Court
Conneaut City Hall
290 Main Street
Conneaut, Ohio 44030

April 30, 2024

TO THE SPEAKER OF THE
OHIO HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
135TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

RE: House Bill 413
Expansion of Conneaut Municipal Court Jurisdiction
Consolidation of Eastern and Western County Courts

Dear Speaker:

As a result of the scheduling of cases on our court docket and other responsibilities I have as a Deacon in the Roman Catholic Church Diocese of Youngstown, I am not able to be personally present to provide proponent testimony at the committee hearing on May 7, 2024 on House Bill 413.

Please allow this letter to indicate my complete support of court regionalization in Ashtabula County as proposed in House Bill 413. Conneaut Municipal Court and Conneaut City Council first submitted written support to the Ashtabula County Commissioners in July 2022 toward the effort of expanding the territorial jurisdiction of Conneaut Municipal Court to include the Village of North Kingsville and Kingsville, Monroe and Sheffield Townships, all of which are located in immediate proximity to the City of Conneaut. These very rural jurisdictions are currently in the Eastern County Court jurisdiction and would not create any significant increase in this Conneaut Municipal Court's caseload. Such a consolidation would appear very similar to the jurisdiction of its neighbor Ashtabula Municipal Court which has in its jurisdiction the City of Ashtabula and adjacent Saybrook, Ashtabula, and Plymouth Townships.

I am also in favor of the ultimate consolidation of the two part-time judgeships part of Eastern and Western County Courts into one full-time judgeship and county court. Ashtabula County has needed to consolidate county courts for many years, and I credit the leadership of the Ashtabula County Commissioners and Casey Kozlowski in particular for spearheading this current effort of court consolidation.

Regionalization is absolutely necessary for the effective and fair administration of justice in Ashtabula County, the most expansive county in Ohio.

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Thank you for the opportunity to submit this letter. If you have any questions, please contact us.

Very Truly Yours,

Nicholas A. Iarocci

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Conneaut Municipal Court