



Ohio Judicial Conference

The Voice of Ohio Judges

House Civil Justice Committee

Paul E. Pfeifer

Opponent Testimony on House Bill 172

May 21, 2024

Chair Hillyer, Vice Chair Mathews, Ranking Member Isaacsohn and members of the House Civil Justice Committee, I thank you for this opportunity to submit opponent testimony for House Bill 172 on behalf of the Ohio Judicial Conference. I am Paul Pfeifer, Executive Director of the Ohio Judicial Conference.

The preparation of a will is perhaps the most important document one executes during a lifetime. Consideration of the provisions contained in a will requires careful planning followed by the assistance of a knowledgeable attorney. House Bill 172 entrusts assistance with these vital life decisions to individuals that have never met and never will meet the testator. Even worse, the drafting of the document will likely be driven by artificial intelligence algorithms.

Countless interested party meetings have attempted to address some of the technical issues with the testator's capacity for final execution, modification, revocation and even the storage of an electronic will. None of those efforts can overcome the fundamental flaw of the E-Will concept—informed personal consultation with the testator is not involved. No offense to pigs, but there is not enough lipstick to camouflage this essential deficiency.

I thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am available to answer any questions you may have.