



Ohio Judicial Conference

The Voice of Ohio Judges

House Homeland Security Committee

Paul Pfeifer

Interested Party Testimony on Senate Bill 37

December 11, 2024

Chair Ghanbari, Vice Chair Plummer, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the House Homeland Security Committee, I thank you for this opportunity to submit interested party testimony for Senate Bill 37 on behalf of the Ohio Judicial Conference. I am Paul Pfeifer, the Executive Director of the Ohio Judicial Conference.

The Criminal, Traffic, Domestic Relations and Juvenile Law & Procedure Committees of the Ohio Judicial Conference continue to review Substitute H.B. 37. We thank the sponsors for meeting with us on several occasions. We believe reducing Ohio's non-driving related suspensions is a laudable goal. The substitute bill being considered by this Committee has been a product of numerous compromises, as described below.

Child Support & Juvenile License Suspensions

We thank the sponsors for alleviating our concerns with these provisions by accepting consensus amended language in the Senate. The amended language will expand limited privilege opportunities while retaining discretion for the courts to determine whether the privileges are warranted based on the feedback of the CSEA. We also thank the sponsors for removing provisions that would limit a juvenile court's discretion to order license suspensions for minors.

Failure to Pay Court Fess

The substitute bill removes one license suspension that we would like to see maintained: suspensions for failing to pay court costs. While these suspensions are not commonly utilized by courts, we feel they are important tools to maintain as a last resort to ensure that people pay the fees. Courts can, and frequently, waive fees for indigent litigants.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on Substitute S.B. 37. We look forward to working with the sponsors and this Committee on further improvements to the bill. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.