



GENERAL GOVERNMENT  
COMMITTEE

Witness Form

Today's Date 4/17/23

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_



John F. Shelley  
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Shaker Hts, OH 44122

Telephone: (216) 406-9395

Organization Representing: Self

Testifying on Bill Number: 53R2

Testimony: \_\_\_\_\_ Verbal  Written \_\_\_\_\_ Both Testifying As: \_\_\_\_\_

Proponent \_\_\_\_\_ Opponent  Interested Party Are you a Registered Lobbyist?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes  No

Special Requests: \_\_\_\_\_

I am deeply opposed to this proposed legislation; should it be placed on the ballot, I will work tirelessly to ensure that it is rejected. Why? Among other things:

- 1) It is a remedy in search of a problem. Statewide citizen initiatives are already very difficult to accomplish, as the very small number of successful efforts in the last century attests.
- 2) When those effort have succeeded, they have generally done so because the General Assembly had resisted enacting law changes that were widely supported by the electorate. If a legislature fails to do what solid majorities of the citizenry supports (or does what solid majorities of the citizenry are opposed to), it deserves to have its actions or inactions overridden. That is the right of the people, appropriately enshrined in Ohio's constitution. It is fundamental to democracy.
- 3) Politically, this proposed legislation is Just Plain Stupid. It seems to be acknowledged that the proposal is a back-door effort to prevent reproductive rights from being specifically protected under Ohio law, as they would be under an initiative effort currently under way. If the legislation goes forward, it amounts to telling the public that the religious, moral, and ethical arguments in favor of strict anti-abortion laws are so weak that the general public that they will never convince a majority of Ohio voters. So we'll change the rules. I fail to see how this can possibly be favorable to the cause of limiting abortion rights.
- 4) Oh, and we're going to spend \$20 million on a special election to get this stuff passed? What ever happened to fiscal responsibility?

Like most people, I am uncomfortable with abortion, and would welcome a thoughtful public dialogue about the matter, leading, perhaps, to a revision of Ohio laws in an appropriate manner. I could live with that, even if the outcome were some distance from my personal vision of an ideal place. What I cannot and will not accept is what the current proposal does: to make it practically impossible (for all time!) for the citizens of Ohio to take action when the legislature ignores the public's consensus about what the law should be. I will fight this legislation with every means at my command should it emerge from the legislature. I would expect to have a lot of company.

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