



Ohio Judicial Conference

The Voice of Ohio Judges

Senate Government Oversight Committee
Paul E. Pfeifer
Interested Party Testimony on House Bill 68
December 6, 2023

Chair Roegner, Vice Chair Antani, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson and members of the Senate Government Oversight Committee, I thank you for this opportunity to submit interested party testimony for House Bill 68 on behalf of the Ohio Judicial Conference. I am Paul Pfeifer, Executive Director of the Ohio Judicial Conference. I would like to submit the family law judges' concerns and recommendations for the bill.

Proposed R.C. 3109.054 will complicate an already complex family situation and will create more litigation and issues to appeal. We suggest removing this section from the bill or re-writing the section's first sentence to allow judicial discretion. This could be accomplished by redrafting the first sentence as follows:

When allocating parental rights and responsibilities or parenting time, a court may, but is not required to consider a parent's decision to do any of the following:

We believe this will continue to allow domestic relations and juvenile courts to determine the best interest of the child without a blanket prohibition on considering relevant evidence of the parent-child relationship or encouraging protracted litigation on the meaning and application of the proposed section.

I thank you for the opportunity to submit interested party testimony on H.B. 68. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.