



Ohio Judicial Conference

The Voice of Ohio Judges

Senate Judiciary Committee

Judge Randall D. Fuller

Proponent Testimony on Amended Senate Bill 174

November 5, 2025

Chair Manning, Vice Chair Reynolds, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I thank you for this opportunity to provide proponent testimony for Amended Senate Bill 174 on behalf of the Ohio Judicial Conference.

I am Judge Randall Fuller. I was elected to serve as the first Judge of the Common Pleas Court of Delaware County, Domestic Relations Division in 2016. Prior to taking the bench, I practiced law in downtown Delaware for 21 years. I currently serve as the President of the Ohio Association of Domestic Relations Judges. I am the Immediate Past President of the Ohio Chapter of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts (AFCC) and serve on the AFCC Board of Trustees.

Background & As-Introduced Version

The history of this bill began when the 122nd General Assembly created the Ohio Task Force on Family Law and Children in 1999. Over the subsequent decades, the Task Force's recommendations were converted into a legislative proposal culminating in the amended bill before this Committee. Numerous changes have been made since this bill was introduced as S.B. 325 last General Assembly including a policy statement on "maximizing parenting time," a simplification of paternity establishment and request for paternity rights and reforming the temporary orders process to clarify that the court is not to draw any presumptions based on the temporary orders in allocating parenting responsibilities or approving a parenting plan.

The bill also contains an uncodified section requiring domestic relations courts to update their local rules based on the bill's provisions. Domestic relations judges will work with the Supreme Court to educate courts and provide recommendations for local rules that maximize parenting time in a manner that is developmentally appropriate for the children. These updates will help promote uniformity across the State.

S.B. 174 Amendment Highlights

Since introduction, S.B. 174 has been further amended based on feedback from interested parties. We thank the sponsors, Senator Gavarone and Senator Hicks-Hudson, for their careful consideration of amendments that will further the bill's goals of protecting and expanding the best interests of children and reduce conflict in family court. We support the majority of these amendments which include further clarifications to the child support process, improvements to temporary orders for unmarried parents and waiver of a court's initial filing fee for unmarried cases.

We are concerned that continuing to focus family law litigation on "parental rights" terminology will distract from the bill's child-centric approach. The bill does not—and cannot—interfere with parents'

fundamental rights. We understand that the legislative process requires compromise and hope to continue the discussion about prioritizing parenting responsibilities in the House.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Amended S.B. 174. We strongly recommend passing this bill to further prioritize the best interest of Ohio's children.