

**Kevin Aleman**  
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**House Bill 339 Proponent Testimony**

Chairman Hillyer, Vice-Chair Grendell, Ranking Member Galonski, and members of the House Civil Justice Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of House Bill 339, which seeks to modernize and update the Ohio Revised Code as it pertains to executing estate planning documents.

My name is Kevin Aleman and I am a licensed attorney in Florida and a founder of the digital estate planning company, Willing, which was acquired by MetLife in 2019. Now, as the head of Digital Estate Planning at MetLife Legal Plans, which is headquartered in Cleveland, I come before you today to ask for your support of House Bill 339, which will allow Ohioans to sign and fully execute their estate plans online.

Currently, Ohio law allows you to create estate planning documents, such as wills, electronically. However, Ohioans cannot sign their documents without an in-person signing ceremony. In Ohio, you are unable to have your will signed and witnessed online by utilizing video conference. The pandemic has made it almost impossible to create or update these critically important documents without meeting face to face with two disinterested strangers as currently required by statute. To make matters worse, the health crisis caused by the pandemic has made it more important than ever to have an estate plan in place, particularly for Ohio's older residents, who are at higher health risk.

Today's technology can help those who cannot meet in-person execution requirements to create or update their estate planning documents. At MetLife, we have an online execution process in place and working in other states, which has helped hundreds of thousands of families create their estate plans online. Ohio already took a step forward with its e-notary bill in 2019. Enacting this bill to allow wills and estate plans to be signed online through video conference is a logical next step. Furthermore, it will allow MetLife to move our notary headquarters and associated jobs to Cleveland.

I think we can all agree the COVID-19 crisis has required all of us and every industry to make adjustments in our everyday lives, both at work and at home. Today's technology, along with videoconferencing, has allowed many of us to carry on our duties despite the lack of in-person contact this past 18 months. This crisis has also showed us that many state laws need updating to match the available technology options that have empowered us to move forward in these difficult times.

I thank Committee members in advance for the opportunity to conduct a demonstration of the technology showing how MetLife currently assists those seeking to create and execute estate planning documents entirely online, which we hope to do in Ohio should House Bill 339 become law.

Thank you again for your time and attention. I respectfully request your support for this important piece of legislation.