

Jennifer J Widmer
Ottawa County Auditor



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February 2, 2021

Chairman Roegner, Vice Chairman McColley, Ranking Member Craig, and members of the State and Local Government Committee:

I am testifying today in favor of SB22 as Auditor of Ottawa County, as a concerned citizen of the State of Ohio, as the wife of a Family Medicine Physician who has treated COVID patients in the office and hospital, and as a mother.

I have had a first-hand view of what single branch oversight of this pandemic has done to Ottawa County. Here in Ottawa County, as of this weekend, we have had 46 deaths. Thirty-five of those deaths have been in long term care facilities. Eleven of them have been in the community. All deaths are sad and the families left behind deserve our support and comfort; however, when the number of community deaths is divided by our current population in Ottawa County the percentage of death is .02%.

While the death percentage is low, the rate at which our County businesses are failing is increasing dramatically. Every day there are new reports of businesses that "cannot make it any longer," or, "are not sure how much longer they can hold on." Additionally, the overdose deaths in the State have increased 38%. We are watching the mental health conditions in the State plummet.

You, our Senators, understand these struggles. You have heard the cries of your constituents and have been responsive. The Executive Branch of our State has not been responsive. In replies to our economic and mental health struggles, the Governor has responded with shame and lectures. We must restore the balance of power in the State and never allow single branch rule again. Senate Bill 22 does just that.

I ask that you please stand up and protect our personal liberties and the future of our State by voting YES on SB22. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jennifer J. Widmer".

Jennifer J. Widmer
Ottawa County Auditor