

November 13, 2023

Representative Brett Hudson Hillyer, Chairman
Civil Justice Committee
Ohio House of Representatives
Columbus, Ohio

Chairman Hillyer:

This is written-only testimony in opposition to Ohio HB 283 to create a second Common Pleas Judge in Adams County for the Probate & Juvenile Divisions. My reasons are as follows:

- The current Common Pleas Judge was duly elected by the people of Adams County to perform the duties of General, Criminal, Domestic Relations, Juvenile & Probate in November of 2022;
- There would be additional cost to the county for partial salary, clerical and office space needlessly using County funds that could be used for other needs;
- There would be state dollars for the remainder of the new Judge salary using tax dollars needlessly.

I read the sponsor testimony by State Representative Justin Pizzulli who currently represents the 90th House District which includes Adams County. Representative Pizzulli has not been elected to serve by the people of the 90th as he was appointed. The previous State Representative for the 90th was Brian Baldrige who was elected and during his tenure as State Representative, he did not sponsor any legislation to create an additional judge in his home county.

I read the sponsor testimony by State Representative Jean Schmidt who no longer represents Adams County. It appears she is relying on input from a few people she has remained in contact with rather than the will of the people of Adams County.

HB 283 appears to be an attempt to overrule the voters of Adams County who voted for Judge Brett Spencer to perform the duties of Common Pleas Judge of ALL Divisions. Perhaps it is "politically" motivated since Judge Spencer is a registered Democrat in an overwhelmingly Republican county and beat one of the sitting County Commissioners who voted in June to request this additional Judge. Judge Spencer was elected with the support of the majority of the rank and file Republicans and the few Democrats in Adams County so let him perform ALL the duties the people elected him to perform.

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