

Name- Robert Wood

Title- Preble County Board of Elections Member

Date- May, 21,2024

Chairman Peterson, Vice Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Humphrey, and members of the House Government Oversight Committee, thank you for the opportunity to offer proponent testimony on House Bill 471.

My name is Robert Wood, currently a Preble County Board of Elections member and formerly Chairman of the Greene County Board of Elections and Executive Chairman of the Greene County Republican Party. I've also done campaign work at the local, state and federal levels for over 20 years in various capacities including campaign management, operations and research.

In modern day America, we increasingly substitute feelings for fact, emotions for logic and triggering for thinking. We know and understand that laws are changed periodically, hopefully after good research, much discussion and thoughtfulness. The legislation before you now logically lays out reasonable clarifications of ORC 3513. For example, our Founding Fathers set out minimum age limits for federal office. Why would they do that? It takes a certain amount of life experience, knowledge and understanding to effectively lead, hence the 25, 30, 35 requirements. They also established a citizenship requirement knowing it isn't logical to think you can well represent a group to which you don't belong. Hence the citizenship requirement.

There are offices that have a maximum age limit at this time. The thought process behind that is to help assure mental clarity and capacity for logic and reason. It is necessary for those in such positions to have full command of their faculties as the decisions these offices make can literally have life and death results. Those decisions require the utmost of those making them and the ability to do such work must be beyond question.

It is self-evident that those committing felonious actions in the past should be barred from holding an elected office creating and/or upholding law. I wouldn't hire an accountant with an embezzlement conviction, a financial advisor with a

securities fraud conviction or a doctor with malpractice charges. These are positions of high trust as are elected offices so those holding such positions need high levels of integrity. Granted, a disorderly conduct charge at age 18 for someone currently age 50 is one thing and potentially could be excused as a youthful mistake, but a person needs to be a professional currently as well as having been one for years to hold a professional position.

In that light, it is necessary and appropriate for the electorate to know for whom they vote. If there are prior issues with a candidate, the public should know. All elected officials and candidates do some type of research on their opponents, and these findings if any show up in various ads, speeches, press releases, et cetera. Changing a name doesn't change the person. Hence the 85 year old requirement to provide former names. It should be noted that married women are asked many times to disclose their maiden names.

In closing, this legislation meets the logical and reasonableness requirements for its adoption into law.

Chairman Peterson and members of the committee, thank you again for the opportunity to share my testimony with you and I'm happy to answer questions.

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