

The Court of Common Pleas

Darke County, Ohio

Jonathan P. Hein, Judge

Courthouse, Greenville, Ohio 45331

(937) 547-7325 fax (937) 547-7323

commonpleas@co.darke.oh.us

April 8, 2014

Mr. Richard Rogovin
Shoemaker, Loop & Kendrick
41 South High Street, Suite 2400
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Eight Point Proposal for Election Reform

Dear Mr. Rogovin:

Thank you for your recent inquiry about the discussion by the Board of Trustees for the Ohio Common Pleas Judges Association about proposed election reform for judicial offices.

On March 28, 2013, the Board of Trustees discussed only the merits of the Chief Justices' eight reform proposals. There was no specific discussion of the materials / proposals which you sent me – though that material was offered to the Board after the meeting.

During the discussion, the Board did not believe that there was sufficient factual basis to reach an informed conclusion. However, there was wide spread support for reform. Therefore, the Board adopted the following resolution:

“The Ohio Common Pleas Judges Association is proud of the fact that Ohio’s Judiciary consists of highly qualified, conscientious judges who unflinchingly aspire to carry out the obligations of their oath each day. If public confidence in the judiciary can be increased by any of the eight proposals put forth by the Chief Justice, the organization believes these issues are worthy of discussion. Speaking on behalf of the trial bench in Ohio, this organization agrees that partisan politics plays no role in the function of an independent judiciary. An independent, neutral judiciary is absolutely vital to the efficient administration of justice in the State of Ohio.”

Anecdotally, I know that retention elections were mentioned several times while discussing specific proposals. Several members were strongly in favor of such a method. However, there were no individual votes on any of the proposals nor did I submit outside proposals for vote.

I appreciate your willingness to provide your materials to the Association. Also, you should be commended on your numerous attempts to improve the legal and electoral system in Ohio. If specific legislative proposals for reform are considered by the Legislature, the Association may again be asked to consider their merits.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jonathan P. Hein". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

Jonathan P. Hein, Judge

cc: Judge Michael Goulding