



Ohio Judicial Conference

The Voice of Ohio Judges

House Judiciary Committee

Shawn Welch

Interested Party Testimony on Substitute House Bill 686

June 10, 2026

Chair Thomas, Vice Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Synenberg and members of the House Judiciary Committee, I thank you for this opportunity to submit interested party testimony for House Bill 686 on behalf of the Ohio Judicial Conference. I am Shawn Welch, Deputy Legislative Counsel for the Ohio Judicial Conference.

We thank the sponsor, Representative Schmidt, for providing a copy of this well-intended bill and for including revisions based on the feedback of the probate judges. We have some suggestions for how this bill could be further improved. First, the bill allows a parent or legal custodian of an incompetent adult child to apply for guardianship at any time after the child reaches 17 years and 6 months of age. The Supreme Court of Ohio is finalizing case time standards for probate courts that will include a six-month timeframe to adjudicate guardianship applications. We recommend amending the bill to allow the application at age 17 and 9 months to comply with the forthcoming time reporting requirement.

Additionally, we hope to work with Representative Schmidt, this Committee and the Child Support Professionals Associations to clarify the intent of proposed R.C. 3109.044. This section may need amended to prevent unintended consequences caused by premature termination of jurisdiction in family courts cases.

We thank you for the opportunity to submit our testimony on H.B. 686. Please let me know if you have any questions.