



Ohio Judicial Conference

The Voice of Ohio Judges

April 26, 2022

Honorable Louis W. Blessing, III
Ohio Senate
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Re: Ohio Judicial Conference's Feedback on Senate Bill 301

Dear Senator Blessing:

The Ohio Judicial Conference's Domestic Relations, Juvenile and Traffic Law & Procedure Committees are reviewing and discussing Senate Bill 301. We support your bill's proposed changes to driver license suspensions for criminal offenses that are unrelated to a person's ability to drive. We do not oppose your efforts to make changes to the child support license suspension process, but we have some concerns with the as-introduced language, which we will address below.

Criminal Offenses

We support the provisions in S.B. 301 that remove license suspensions as possible penalties for certain drug-related offenses. The OJC has long taken the position that license suspensions should be possible only for those offenses that pertain to the operation or ownership of a vehicle, and we were proponents of legislation several general assemblies ago that made suspensions for drug offenses discretionary rather than mandatory. We appreciate your willingness to go a step farther and remove the possibility of suspensions altogether for these offenses.

The OJC would like to take this opportunity to point out that there is more that can be improved in Chapter 45. Sec. 4509.17 is only one example, but it is particularly concerning. Security suspensions are implemented without due process, is of an indeterminate duration, and does not allow for limited driving privileges during its duration. We would be happy to work with you on addressing this and other suspension issues in S.B. 301.

Child Support License Suspensions

We are open to changes for the child support license suspension process, as long as Ohio remains in compliance with federal law. Your sponsor testimony indicates a familiarity with these federal requirements. You also mentioned that you have met with the Ohio Child Support Enforcement Agency Director's Association. We have reviewed OCDA's S.B. 301 analysis and agree with their concerns and recommendations. We hope to work with you and OCDA to restore due process to the child support enforcement agencies and clarify the process for granting and revoking limited privileges through the

court, particularly which court is to hear the requests for limited driving privileges, as it is currently unclear in the bill.

We thank you for the opportunity to present our feedback and recommendations for S.B. 301. If you would like to arrange a meeting with the Judicial Conference, please do not hesitate to contact our Domestic Relations, Juvenile and Probate Law & Procedure Committee liaison Shawn Welch, by phone at (614) 387-9765 or by email at shawn.welch@sc.ohio.gov. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul E Pfeifer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "P".

Paul E. Pfeifer
Executive Director
Ohio Judicial Conference