IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS FOR HAMILTON COUNTY, OHIO

:

:

PLANNED PARENTHOOD SOUTHWEST OHIO REGION, et al.,
Plaintiffs,
v.
OHIO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, et al.,
Defendants.

Case No. A 2100870

Judge Alison Hatheway

THE STATE'S NOTICE OF APPEAL

The Ohio Department of Health; Bruce Vanderhoff, Director of the Ohio Department of Health; and the State Medical Board of Ohio ("the State") hereby give notice of their appeal to the First District Court of Appeals of Ohio from the Entry Granting Plaintiffs' Motion for Judgment on the Pleading entered by this Court in this action on February 13, 2025. A copy of the judgment entry being appealed from is attached hereto.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that the foregoing was filed electronically and served upon the following via

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		ION PLEAS NTY, OHIO	S. C. Line # :
PLANNED PARENTHOOD		CASE NO. A 2100870	
SOUTHWEST OHIO REGION, ET	•	ľ	
AL.,	:	JUDGE ALISON HATHEW	VAY
-1	:		
Plaintiffs,	:		
	:	ENTRY GRANTING	
-VS	•	PLAINTIFFS' MOTIO	N FOR
	:	JUDGMENT ON THE	
Ohio Department of	: 1	PLEADINGS	
HEALTH, ET AL.,	:		
•	•		
Defendants.	:		

This matter comes before the Court upon Plaintiffs' Motion for Judgment on the Pleadings, filed on August 12, 2024. The Court, having considered the Motion, the responsive briefs, and being fully apprised of the law, finds Plaintiffs' Motion to be well taken. Therefore, Plaintiffs' Motion for Judgment on the Pleadings is hereby **GRANTED**.

BACKGROUND

Plaintiffs Planned Parenthood Southwest Ohio Region ("PPSWO"), Dr. Sharon Liner, Planned Parenthood of Greater Ohio ("PPGOH"), Preterm-Cleveland ("Preterm"), Women's Med Group Professional Corporation ("WMGPC"), and Northeast Ohio Women's Center ("NEOWC") (collectively "Plaintiffs") are health care providers in the state of Ohio who provide reproductive healthcare, including procedural abortions. Plaintiffs raised due-process and equal-protection claims under the Ohio Constitution and pursuant to the Declaratory Judgment Act, R.C. 2721.03, against 2020 Am.S.B. No. 27 ("S.B. 27"). S.B. 27 requires embryonic and fetal tissue from a procedural abortion to be disposed of by cremation or internment.



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AS COSTS HEREIN.

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Under this Court's previous order, Defendants were preliminarily enjoined from enforcing S.B. 27 until 30 days after implementing rules took effect on February 8, 2022. Before the effective date, Plaintiffs filed a second Motion for Preliminary Injunction, which this Court granted on January 31, 2022, to enjoin S.B. 27 until the final judgment in this case. Before the Court now, following the passage of the Reproductive Freedom Amendment, Plaintiffs filed a Motion for Judgment on the Pleadings to declare S.B. 27 violates the Ohio Constitution and to permanently enjoin Defendants Ohio Department of Health ("ODH"), Ohio Director Bruce Vanderhoff, the State Medical Board of Ohio, and county and city prosecutors from enforcing S.B. 27.

A. S.B. 27

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S.B. 27, a copy of which is attached as Exhibit A to Plaintiffs' Complaint, requires that "fetal remains" (which R.C. 3726.01(C) defines as "the product of human conception that has been aborted") from a procedural abortion be disposed of only by cremation or interment. A patient may decide whether to dispose by cremation or interment, but if no decision is made, the provider may choose. However, this burden only applies to procedural abortion, not to miscarriage management or in vitro fertilization ("IVF").

Failure to comply with S.B. 27 would subject Plaintiffs and their physicians to significant criminal penalties. Also, they face noncriminal penalties including license suspension or revocation for both abortion facilities and physicians, fines, damages, and court injunctions. *See* Ohio Adm. Code 3701-83-05(C); Ohio Adm. Code 3701-83-05.1(B), (C)(2), (C)(4), and (F); Ohio Adm. Code 3701-83-05.2(F); R.C. 3702.32(D); R.C. 2317.56(G)(1) and (2); R.C. 4731.22(B)(21) and (23); R.C. 4731.225(B); R.C. 3701.79(J).

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B. Reproductive Freedom Amendment

On November 7, 2023, Ohioans overwhelmingly voted to amend the Ohio Constitution to explicitly enshrine the right to reproductive freedom. The Reproductive Freedom Amendment provides, in relevant part, that:

- (A) Every individual has a right to make and carry out one's own reproductive decisions, including but not limited to decisions on...
 (5) abortion.
- (B) The State shall not, directly or indirectly, burden, penalize, prohibit, interfere with, or discriminate against either:
 - (1) An individual's voluntary exercise of this right or

(2) A person or entity that assists an individual exercising that right, unless the State demonstrates that it is using the least restrictive means to advance the individual's health in accordance with widely accepted and evidence-based standards of care.

Ohio Const., art. I, § 22.

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LAW AND ANALYSIS

A. Civ.R. 12(C) Standard for Dismissal

A Civ.R. 12(C) motion "presents only questions of law, and determination of the motion for judgment on the pleadings is restricted solely to the allegations in the pleadings." *Whaley*, 92 Ohio St.3d at 582, 752 N.E.2d at 275. Motions for judgment on the pleadings may be brought by either party when the pleadings have closed and there exist no material factual disputes such that the court need only resolve questions of law to grant relief. *State ex rel. Midwest Pride IV, Inc. v. Pontious*, 75 Ohio St.3d 565, 570 (1966); *Trinity Health Sys. v. MDX Corp.*, 2009-Ohio-417, ¶ 17 (7th Dist.). A motion for judgment on the pleadings filed by plaintiffs should be granted if, construing the material allegations in the complaint and the answer in favor of the nonmoving party, the court finds beyond doubt that the defendants could prove no set of facts on which they could prevail. *Trinity Health* at ¶ 18.

B. Plaintiffs Have Traditional and Third-Party Standing.

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Prior to the Reproductive Freedom Amendment's passage, the State attempted to argue Plaintiffs lacked third-party standing – which this Court addressed in its Entry Granting Plaintiffs' Second Motion for Preliminary Injunction. Specifically, this Court found that Plaintiffs were "likely to prevail against Defendants' third-party standing argument." Third-party standing exists where a claimant "(i) suffers its own injury in fact, (ii) possesses a sufficiently 'close relationship with the person who possesses the right,' and (iii) shows some 'hindrance' that stands in the way of the claimant seeking relief." *City of Liverpool v. Columbiana Cty. Budget Comm.*, 2007-Ohio-3759, ¶ 22, *quoting Kowalski v. Tesmer*, 543 U.S. 125, 129-130 (2004).

Following the passage of the Reproductive Freedom Amendment, which explicitly grants Plaintiffs standing in this case, the State's lack of standing argument continues. Specifically, the Reproductive Freedom Amendment states, in relevant part, that the State may not "directly or indirectly discriminate against...[a] person or entity that assists individual[s] exercising" their right "to make and carry out [their] own reproductive decisions, including but not limited to decisions on...abortion." Here, Plaintiffs are healthcare providers in the state of Ohio who provide reproductive healthcare, including procedural abortions.

Despite the Amendment's clear text, and despite the State's agreement that S.B. 27 imposes special burdens upon Plaintiffs as abortion providers, the State nonetheless argues Plaintiffs lack standing for themselves and for their patients. S.B. 27 regulates and imposes severe penalties for noncompliance on abortion providers and facilities by requiring providers who perform procedural abortions to take on numerous additional obligations—paying for the cremation or interment of embryonic and fetal tissue from procedural abortions—upon pain of loss of licensure, civil penalties, civil suits, and criminal penalties for themselves and their staff. The State's lack of standing argument is not well-taken. Rather, Plaintiffs' Complaint adequately pleads facts to demonstrate they have traditional and third-party standing in this case.

C. Plaintiffs are entitled to judgment on the pleadings.

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1. S.B. 27 violates Article 1, Section 22 of the Ohio Constitution.

The State argues S.B. 27 deals solely with what happens to fetal tissue after an abortion and does not limit anyone's right to have an abortion. S.B. 27 does regulate what happens to fetal tissue after an abortion, but to say it does not limit anyone's right to have an abortion is not accurate. First, S.B. 27 requires abortion providers to explain the cremation or interment decision to patients seeking abortions *before* the abortion and as part of the abortion decision-making process. Additionally, the State fails to acknowledge that before this decision can be made, abortion providers must have established relationships with willing crematory facilities and funeral homes to ensure the fetal tissue's cremation or burial in accordance with S.B. 27. The decision to cremate or inter, and to establish these relationships must occur *before* the abortion, so S.B. 27 does not solely deal with what happens after the abortion.

Plaintiffs argue that S.B. 27 violates the Ohio Constitution by "indisputably discriminat[ing] *against* procedural abortion patients and providers because [S.B. 27] treats them worse than other patients by restricting abortion patients' ability to dispose of the tissue in the same way as tissue from any other health care service would be handled." Importantly, S.B. 27 only applies to fetal tissue from procedural abortions and has no effect on fetal tissue from comparable health care, such as miscarriage management. The Reproductive Freedom Amendment explicitly states the State shall

not directly or indirectly discriminate against a person or entity that assists an individual exercising that right. Plaintiffs, as abortion providers and facilities, are directly and indirectly impacted by S.B. 27's requirements.

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Abortion providers must bear expenses that do not exist for other healthcare providers that routinely dispose of tissue, including identical fetal tissue resulting in miscarriage management or IVF. Abortion providers must explain the decision to patients and if the patient does not indicate the method or location of final disposition, the abortion provider must choose for the patient. R.C. 3726.04. Abortion facilities must facilitate and bear the cost of the cremation or burial of the fetal tissue which requires maintaining contracts with willing crematory facilities and funeral homes. Abortion facilities must also store the fetal tissue until patients make a disposition decision which does not have a set time limit.

2. S.B. 27 does not further individual health.

Discrimination against abortion patients or abortion providers can only occur when the State demonstrates "that it is using the least restrictive means to advance the individual's health in accordance with widely accepted and evidence-based standards of care." Ohio Const. art. I, § 22(B). S.B. 27's regulations are exclusively for the disposition of embryonic and fetal tissue, not the health care of the patient. The State did not plead nor put forth any arguments regarding how the disposition requirements further patient health. As the Plaintiffs argue, it is clear why the State has been silent on this issue: S.B. 27 simply does nothing to serve patient health. This fact becomes even more clear when considering that S.B. 27's disposition requirements apply only to tissue from procedural abortion and not to *identical tissue* from miscarriage management or to embryos from IVF. S.B. 27 serves only to target and discriminate against individuals seeking procedural abortions and their healthcare providers.

3. S.B. 27's provisions cannot be severed.

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The State argues that this Court cannot enjoin S.B. 27 in its entirety, rather, it "must sever any invalid provision and preserve remaining law." *State Def.'s Memo. in Opp. at 3-4.* However, as Plaintiffs point out, the State fails to analyze its severability argument under the three-part test established by *Geiger v. Geiger*, 117 Ohio St. 451 (1927). In *Geiger*, the Ohio Supreme Court articulated a three-part test to determine whether an unconstitutional statutory provision may be severed from the remaining portions of the law. *Geiger* directs this Court to ask:

(1) Are the constitutional and the unconstitutional parts capable of separation so that each may be read and may stand by itself? (2) Is the unconstitutional part so connected with the general scope of the whole as to make it impossible to give effect to the apparent intention of the Legislature if the clause or part is stricken out? (3) Is the insertion of words or terms necessary in order to separate the constitutional part from the unconstitutional part, and to give effect to the former only?

Id. at 466. "A portion of a statute can be excised only when the answer to the first question is yes and the answers to the second and third questions are no." State v. Noling, 2016-Ohio-8252, ¶ 35.

R.C. 3726.02, the provision at issue here from S.B. 27, states "final disposition of fetal remains from a surgical abortion at an abortion facility shall be by cremation or interment." The State argues the other provisions of S.B. 27 are not tied to the disposition requirement so the rest of the bill can remain. Yet, the remaining provisions rely on the disposition requirement – which is perhaps why the State failed to analyze its severability argument under the proper standard.

The first prong is not satisfied where the sentences depend on the other for any of its meaning. Here, when R.C. 3726.02, S.B. 27's disposition requirement, is struck, the remaining provisions are emptied of meaning and cannot stand on their own, because every provision either constitutes, contemplates, or cross-references the disposition requirement at issue. For instance, R.C. 2317.56 requires patients seeking abortions to certify notification of the right to choose disposal and complete the disposition determination. R.C. 3701.79 requires abortion facilities to keep records of the method of final disposition of the fetal remains. R.C. 3726.03 allows patients seeking abortions to choose cremation or interment and location of final disposition. R.C. 3726.04 requires abortion facilities to make the disposition decision for the patient if the patient declines to do so. R.C. 3726.09 requires abortion facilities to pay for the disposition of the tissue unless the patient identifies another location. R.C. 3726. 10 requires abortion facilities to document the disposition determination in patient's medical records. R.C. 3726.12 requires abortion facilities to have written policies and procedures regarding cremation or interment. R.C. 3726.13 requires abortion facilities to maintain a written list of locations for the final disposition. R.C. 3726.99 imposes a first-degree misdemeanor for failure to dispose of fetal tissue humanely. R.C. 4717.271 imposes requirements for crematory operators for disposing fetal tissue. In other words, the answer to Geiger prong one is "no" and the unconstitutional statutory provision may not be severed from the remaining portions of the law. While the analysis could end here, the Court will address Plaintiff's analysis of prong two.

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The second prong is not satisfied where the unconstitutional part is so connected to the general scope that severing would defeat the Legislature's intention. Here, it is clear that the disposition requirement is too connected to the remainder of S.B. 27's provisions to be severed. The disposition requirement was referred to as the "core provision" by both parties. Every provision of S.B. 27 depends on the existence of the disposition requirement. This is even more clear when considering the purpose of the S.B. 27: to require tissue from a procedural abortion to be disposed of by interment or cremation. Further, S.B. 27 lacks a severability clause, which is further evidence of the intent for the bill's separate provisions to work together as a whole.

S.B. 27's failure at *Geiger* prong one suffices to resolve the severability analysis and the failure at prong two provides an additional, independent basis to enjoin S.B. 27 in full. Due to failure at prong one and two, prong three does not need to be analyzed.

3. Plaintiffs are entitled to a permanent injunction.

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"A permanent injunction is [***17] issued after the movant has demonstrated a right to relief under the applicable substantive law." West v. City of Cincinnati, 2024-Ohio-1951, 245 N.E.3d 304, ¶ 20 (1st Dist.), quoting Vontz v. Miller, 2016-Ohio-8477, 111 N.E.3d 452, ¶ 25 (1st Dist.), citing Procter & Gamble Co. v. Stoneham, 140 Ohio App.3d 260, 267, 747 N.E.2d 268 (1st Dist.2000). "A party seeking a permanent injunction must show," by clear and convincing evidence, "that the injunction is necessary to prevent irreparable harm and that the party does not have an adequate remedy at law." Stoneham at 267-268.

Here, even construing all of the allegations in the pleadings in a light most favorable to that State, it remains clear beyond doubt that the State could prove no set of facts entitling them to recovery. Plaintiffs have demonstrated a right to relief under the law, and have proven by clear and convincing evidence that the injunction is necessary to prevent irreparable harm and that there is no other adequate remedy at law. S.B. 27 is a restriction on abortion that clearly violates the Ohio Constitution. If S.B. 27 were allowed to go into effect, it would severely impede access to abortion resulting in delayed or denied healthcare. In addition, this restriction is without reason, as the State has not plead nor offered any argument about how S.B 27 is the "least restrictive means to advance the individual's health in accordance with widely accepted and evidence-based standards of care." Further, its unconstitutional provisions cannot be severed. The only adequate remedy is to permanently enjoin S.B. 27.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, Plaintiffs' Motion for Judgment on the Pleadings is hereby **GRANTED**. Defendants, their officers, agents, servants, employees, attorneys and those persons in active concert or participation with them are **PERMANENTLY ENJOINED** from enforcing S.B. 27. This is a final appealable order and there is no just cause for delay.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

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Judge Alison Hatheway

FIRST DISTRICT COURT OF APPEALS CIVIL DOCKET STATEMENT

Notice: Pursuant to Loc.R. 3.1(A)(2)(c), failure to file a completed docket statement may result in the dismissal of the appeal.

Name of Trial Court:	Appeal No
Hamiton County Common Pleas	Trial No
Caption:	Trial Judge
Planned Parenthood Southwest Ohio Region, et Plaintiff-Appellant <u>or</u> Appellee	Date of Judgment(s) Being Appealed February 13, 2025
vs. Ohio Department of Health, et al., Defendant-Appellant <u>or</u> Appellee	Notice of appeal was filed in compliance with: ✓ App.R. 4(A) (within 30 days); or
	Related or Prior Appeals

General

Have you attached to the notice of appeal a copy of the final judgment being appealed? Yes 🗹 No 🗌		
Is this an appeal from an adoption or a termination of parental rights case? Yes 🗌 No 🖌		
Specify the type of action in the trial court (e.g., administrative appeal, contract, declaratory judgment, personal injury, custody dispute, will contest, etc.): <u>Civil case seeking declaratory and injunctive relief.</u>		
Probable issues for review: Whether R.C. 2317.56, 3701.341, 3701.79, 3726.01, 3726.02, 3726.03, 3726.04, 3726.041,		
3726.042, 3726.05, 3726.09, 3726.10, 3726.11, 3726.12, 3726.13, 3726.14, 3726.15, 3726.16, 3726.95, 3726.99, & 4717.27		
violate Article I, Section 22 of the Ohio Constitution. Is the order appealed from a final appealable order: Did the judgment dispose of all claims by and against all parties? Yes 🗸 No 🗌		
If not, is there a determination that there is "no just reason for delay" pursuant to Civ.R. 54(B)? Yes No		
If you are appealing an interlocutory order, please specify the authority (e.g., specific provision under R.C. 2505.02, other statute, or case law) that gives this Court jurisdiction to hear the appeal:		
Is this an appeal from a judgment ruling on an objection to a magistrate's decision? Yes 🔲 No 🖌		

Please provide the following information for **all** parties to the proceedings in the trial court.

A party who files a notice of appeal is an appellant. A party who would be adversely affected if the judgment below is reversed should be designated as an appellee. All other parties to the action below should retain their trial court designation (plaintiff, defendant, third-party plaintiff, third-party defendant, petitioner, respondent, etc.).

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	Party's designation Appellee Appellee Attorney's name
Party's designation	Party's designation
Party's designation Appellee Attorney's name Fanon A. Rucker	Party's designation <u>Appellee</u> Attorney's name <u>B. Jessie Hill</u>
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Party's designation <u>Appellant</u> Attorney's name <u>Amanda Narog</u>	Party's designation <u>Appellant</u> Attorney's name <u>Amanda Narog</u>
Party's designation Appellant Attorney's name Amanda Narog Attorney's registration number 0093954	Party's designation Appellant Attorney's name Amanda Narog Attorney's registration number 0093954
Party's designation Appellant Attorney's name Amanda Narog Attorney's registration number 0093954 Address of counsel or party 30 E. Broad Street	Party's designation Appellant Attorney's name Amanda Narog Attorney's registration number 0093954 Address of counsel or party 30 E. Broad Street
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Defendant Party's designation Mathias Heck, Jr. Attorney's registration number14171	Party's designation Attorney's name
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Columbus, OH 43215	Room 106, Cleveland, OH 44114
Phone	Phone
Email	Email <u>MGriffin@clevelandohio.gov</u>
Party's name	Party's name
Party's designation	Party's designation
Party's designation	
Party's designation Attorney's name	Party's designation Defendant MARGARET PASQUALONE
Defendant Party's designation Marlene J. Ridenour Attorney's name Attorney's registration number	Party's designation_Defendant Attorney's name
Defendant Party's designation Marlene J. Ridenour Attorney's name Attorney's registration number 62881 Address of counsel or party	Party's designation Defendant Attorney's name MARGARET PASQUALONE Attorney's registration number 87292 Address of counsel or party 3600 Shroyer Rd.
Defendant Party's designation Marlene J. Ridenour Attorney's name Attorney's registration number 62881 Address of counsel or party 5661 Perkins Road Bedford Heights, OH 44146	Party's designation Defendant Attorney's name MARGARET PASQUALONE Attorney's registration number 87292 Address of counsel or party 3600 Shroyer Rd. Kettering, OH 45429-2799 45429-2799

Mediation

None Minimal Moderate Extensive

Have settlement discussions taken place since the judgment appealed from was enter	ered? Yes [🗌 No 🖌	
Would a mediation conference assist in the resolution of this matter (choose one)?	Yes 🗌 1	No 🖌	

Record

This Docket Statement serves as a praceipe to the clerk of courts to prepare and transfer the record as specified below by the appellant:

The record will consist of ONLY the original papers, exhibits, and a certified copy of the docket and journal entries that were filed in the trial court. [App.R. 9(A)].
 By checking this box, appellant acknowledges that no transcript(s) of proceedings are required to be prepared, and no App.R. 9(C) Statement or App.R. 9(D) Agreed Statement will be filed.

In addition to the original papers, exhibits, and a certified copy of the docket and journal entries that were filed in the trial court, the record will include (choose one):

Complete Transcript of Proceedings under App.R. 9(B)*

Partial Transcript of Proceedings under App.R. 9(B)*

Statement under App.R. 9(C)

Agreed Statement under App.R. 9(D)

*If the record will include transcript(s) of proceedings, please complete the following:

All transcripts of proceedings have already been prepared and filed in the trial court, and no additional transcripts will be filed.

There are additional transcript(s) of proceedings that must still be prepared and filed.** The transcript(s) of proceedings to be filed are (choose one):

> Complete Transcript of Proceedings [App.R. 9(B)]. Partial Transcript of Proceedings [App.R. 9(B)].

If <u>partial</u>, please provide a list of the hearing dates you will be ordering.

If not currently known, indicate this on the lines above and file an amended docket statement when dates become known.

Note: If partial transcript is selected, appellant must comply with App.R. 9(B)(5). Appellee may follow App.R. 9(B)(5) if appellee considers transcripts or other parts of the proceedings necessary to the appeal.

**If there are transcript(s) of proceedings that must still be prepared and filed, the *Court Reporter's Certification* must be completed by the court reporter and appellant must comply with Loc.R. 9(B)(1) by attaching a copy of the transcript order to this docket statement.

COURT REPORTER'S CERTIFICATION (to be signed by the court reporter)

Will the Court Reporter complete and file the requested transcript(s) of proceedings within 40 days of the filing of the notice of appeal (20 days if on the accelerated calendar)? Yes No If No, please explain why the transcript(s) of proceedings will not be ready for filing within 40 days from the notice of appeal (or 20 days for the accelerated calendar):
Estimated Date of Filing:
Signature of Court Reporter: Date:
(Email authority of court reporter is permitted; if relying on email authority, please attach the email.)
Calendar Designation Please choose the appropriate calendar designation for this case. Regular Calendar: Pursuant to Loc.R. 11.1(A), all appeals are placed on the regular calendar by default. Accelerated Calendar: Do you wish instead to have your appeal assigned to the accelerated calendar? Yes If Yes, please identify the applicable factor(s) under Loc.R. 11.1(B) which support the assignment of the case to the accelerated calendar:
Expedited Calendar: Must this case be expedited as being one of the following types of cases? Yes Ves
 Abortion-Bypass appeal from juvenile court [App.R. 11.2(B)] Adoption or parental rights appeal [App.R. 11.2(C)] Dependent, Abused, Neglected, and Unruly Child appeal [App.R. 11.2(D)] Election contests [R.C. 3515.08] Appeal from the Court of Claims involving public records [R.C. 2743.75(G)] Other (please specify authority for expedited treatment):
<u>Certificate of Service</u>
I certify that a copy of this docket statement was served uponall parties
on <u>3/14/25</u> by the following method: <u>Email</u> .

Amanda L. Narog

Signature