



OHIO FARM BUREAU FEDERATION  
**Agriculture for Good Government**  
POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE

**1. What are the top issues facing the Ohio judicial system, and how should the Ohio Supreme Court provide leadership to those issues?**



I am running for the Ohio Supreme Court because I want to do my part to ensure that the high court serves as an effective firewall protecting our democracy and the rule of law. My vision for the future of Ohio's judicial system includes an independent court, free from party politics. The Ohio Supreme Court should be an equal branch of the government, equal to the governor and to the

legislature, not a rubber stamp for either.

One of the top issues facing the Ohio judicial system is the erosion of public respect for our courts and the judicial system in general. If people do not trust and have confidence in the courts to dispense justice and to apply the law fairly, we risk a breakdown of orderly democratic society. In recent years, there has been an increase in questioning the political motivations behind judicial decisions. This degrades respect for all judges and courts in general, not just the specific judges who are the subject of criticism. In Ohio, for example, we now have party affiliation on the ballot for judges on the courts of appeals and the Supreme Court. I am concerned that partisanship – real or perceived – is coming to be accepted as the explanation for the outcomes of cases – not justice or the fair application of the law.

The Supreme Court can provide leadership in shoring up respect for the courts by each member being beyond reproach. Members of the high court should be engaged and visible in the community. In addition, the high court can lead by example with integrity, issuing opinions that explain the rationale behind any



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decision, clearly articulating the points of law and facts that drive the decision.

**2. How do you see the role of amicus curiae parties or briefs in Ohio Supreme Court litigation?**

I see amicus curiae briefs as providing a unique perspective on what are often complex legal questions. In my experience, an amicus brief will address a particular aspect of a bigger case, and shine a bright light on one particular issue or perspective. While amicus briefs may be useful, I would expect the parties' briefs to provide the legal analysis that will help guide resolution of the question(s) before the court.

**3. Can you explain your judicial philosophy in plain English?**

I approach every case with an open mind, with no expectation for any particular outcome. After I review the parties' briefs and participate in oral argument, after I have considered the evidence presented to the trial court (if applicable), and after I have researched and analyzed the law, only then do I make my decision on how to address and resolve each assignment of error. When a statute is unambiguous, I apply it as written; when ambiguous, I interpret it using the plain language as my starting point.