

ORIGINAL

THE OHIO SUPREME COURT

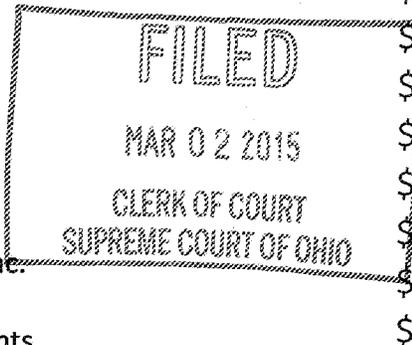
Case 15 – 0087

STATE EX REL., Rosanna L. Miller,
Relator,

Vs.

ANN E. BECK, JUDGE
BELLEFONTAINE CITY
MUNICIPAL COURT, ET AL,

OHIO PLAN Risk Management, Inc.
Certificate #OH1010268-P14,
Respondents



WRIT of ERROR

Grant by Right

or

Default Judgment

Rosanna L. Miller (Relator) moves this court to grant the Writ of Error for reasonable grounds to correct the Third District Court error and grant the Writ of Prohibition to stop issuing warrants for court cost and other violations of the law by the Respondents. After re-reading the Writ of Error, Relator fails to understand what was so difficult for Respondents to comprehend. There is only one Writ of Error case filed to the Ohio Supreme Court to correct the erred opinion from the Third District Court on December 17, 2014 case #CA8-14-11 for the Writ of Prohibition. This is not repetitive or duplicate. There is no need to restate the violations by Respondents in Relator's Writ of Error filed on January 16, 2015 with Affidavit of Facts. It will be referenced as if rewritten herein. Footnotes and Exhibits are amended.

Relator amends the list of violations by Respondents adding #7 for permitting the city prosecutor Joe Bader to sign Summon Complaints as an affiant to criminally charge people. It is an established Ohio law that *anyone who knowingly makes a false statement that is "sworn or affirmed before a notary public or another person empowered to administer oaths" can be prosecuted under R.C. 2921.13...*

and...can lead to a felony prosecution under R.C. 2921.11 for the crime of perjury.⁵ Could these falsified perjured convictions boost the arrest warrants for court costs?

The people request the Ohio Supreme Court to take Judicial Notice of the following:

1. Relator's Affidavit of Facts were sworn under penalty of perjury and is Prima Facie evidence to the truth of the Writ of Error when it has not been rebutted by Affidavit⁶. Respondents repeating Relator's facts are not rebuttal. Respondents have never produced evidence or rebutted, by Affidavit of Facts under penalty of perjury, to dispute or disprove Relator's facts in either this Writ of Error or Writ of Prohibition. A default judgment is pursuant to Ohio Civ. R. 55 Default, U.C.C. ARTICLE 1 §206 Presumptions and Fed. R. Civ. P. 55 Default Judgment.⁷

2. The Third District Court denied Relator's Writ of Prohibition claiming there was no warrant issued when it is clear the warrant was issued on Relator in exhibit B&D. Respondents have denied records exist that they themselves entered in the court record. If the Appellate court is going to ignore the evidence before them they will do so in an appeal as well. Furthermore other people were issued unconstitutional warrants for court costs leaving the Writ of Prohibition as the proper action. If 543 warrants are still outstanding as stated in exhibit C, how many were originally issued? That is an alarming number.

3. Ohio Plan Risk Management is paid by tax payers to cover them from injury committed by the Respondents. It is conditional that the insured comply with the letter of the laws. Without complying they have faulted on their terms⁸. Ohio Plan has an equal duty in commerce to honor the laws. The Writ of Prohibition will enforce their duty to cover those damages from injuries by those violations or crimes. Ohio Plan has not answered to the violations their insured are committing.

4. It is a conflict of interest for Law Director Howard Traul to be involved in this case. Traul was the plenary guardian ad litem for Relator's father who failed to secure \$175,000.00 of the family assets⁹. He was instrumental in aiding James Miller to remain with Relator's father who abused and exploited him. Traul trespassed in Relators' father's home in 2008 Police Report #2008000602177 but the county prosecutor refused to charge him.

5. It is a conflict of interest for Ms. Dinkler to be involved in this case. She is an attorney for Ohio Plan Risk Management who represented Respondents' agents in *James Miller vs Bellefontaine City* on two cases from 2010 and 2011. In the deposition of James she has first-hand knowledge that Relator's mother's death is an open ongoing investigation in the Bellefontaine Police Dept., James Miller is the suspect, James was abusing and exploiting Relator's father, attorney Steven Fansler had knowledge of this exploitation, there is approximately \$850,000.00 plundered out of the family estate to date and Relator was separated from father by threat. Steven Fansler testified against Relator before Respondent pretending to be the alleged victim (Relator's father) to convict Relator. City prosecutor Joe Bader signed the summons as the affiant who prosecuted Relator. Recently Fansler finally confessed in probate court on April 28 and Nov. 14, 2014 that Relator's father hasn't handled his affairs for 10 years, diagnosed with dementia and mentally impaired. James owes courts costs and nobody is stalking him to pay those or loser damages. Relator is still fighting for justice as the Successor Trustee for their Living Trust. To find in favor of Respondents on Rule 4.03 is denying justice for the aforementioned criminal crimes. The people have a right to redress, that the founding fathers and service men fought and died for. Adjudicating your own cause never has a good outcome.¹⁰

6. The main reason to grant this Writ of Error for the Writ of Prohibition is supported by the American Civil Liberties Union Mike Brickner who said "Debtors' prisons are an outdated relic of the past...Hopefully, the Supreme Court of Ohio's actions today will help ensure that no one else is illegally jailed simply for being poor". He continued to say "It's been over 30 years since the U.S. Supreme Court declared them unconstitutional. It is high time for Ohio to end debtors' prisons altogether." That was February 5, 2014. The warrant and subsequent arrest on Relator was issued after Respondent was notified of its unconstitutionality and it is unknown if it is still being practiced today. This is without question a Federal issue if this Writ is not granted. The cases supporting this are cited in the attached letter from the ACLU on page 1 with the Chief Justice's response. (Ex G)

WHEREFORE, the Writ of Error shall be granted to Relator to issue the Writ of Prohibition to Respondents prohibiting all illegal practices in the Bellefontaine Municipal Court. The conditions in the Counterclaims for damages from injuries shall be ordered and paid within 30 days. That order includes the return of Relator's father, Clair R. Miller, to Relator immediately and any other remedy the court deems just.

All Rights Reserved without prejudice.



Rosanna L. Miller, Relator
10469 Westfall Road
Amanda, Ohio 43102
740-969-2468

⁵ *Toledo Bar Assn. v. Neller*, 102 Ohio St.3d 1234, 2004-Ohio-2895. (page 2)

⁶ Non Rebutted Affidavits are "Prima Facie Evidence in the Case," *United States vs. Kis*, 658 F.2d, 526, 536-337 (7th Cir. 1981); *Cert Denied*, 50 U.S. L.W. 2169; S.Ct. March 22, 1982. "Indeed, no more than (Affidavits) is necessary to make the Prima Facie Case."; *Seitzer v. Seitzer*, 80 Cal. Rptr. 688 "Uncontested Affidavit taken as true in support of Summary Judgment."

Truth is expressed in the form of an Affidavit. See Lev. 5:4-5; Lev. 6:3-5; Lev. 19:11-13; Num. 30:2; Matt. 5:33; James 5:12.

A matter must be expressed to be resolved. See Heb. 4:16; Phil. 4:5; Eph. 6:19-21. Legal maxim: "He who fails to assert his rights has none."

An un rebutted affidavit stands as truth in commerce. See 1 Pet. 1:25; Heb. 6:13-15. Legal maxim: "He who does not deny, admits."

An un rebutted affidavit becomes a judgment in commerce. See Heb. 6:16-17. Any proceeding in court, tribunal, or arbitration forum consists of a contest, or "duel," of commercial affidavits wherein the points remaining un rebutted in the end stand as the truth and the matters to which the judgment of the law is applied.

⁷ U.C.C. ART. 1 §206. Presumptions. Whenever the *Uniform Commercial Code* creates a "presumption" with respect to a fact, or provides that a fact is "presumed," the trier of fact must find the existence of the fact unless and until evidence is introduced that supports a finding of its nonexistence.

⁸ https://ohioauditor.gov/references/compliancemanuals/2010/OCSappendixB_public_officers_bonds_Sept10.pdf
PUBLIC OFFICERS' BONDS

<http://das.ohio.gov/Divisions/GeneralServices/RiskManagement/CrimeandBond.aspx> It is incumbent upon each elected official to procure the bond as required by Ohio law. Failure to give bond has the same effect as *refusing to accept the office* (see ORC § 3.30).

⁹ *In re Guardianship of Clair Miller* http://www.seonet.state.oh.us/pdf_viewer/pdf_viewer.aspx?pdf=668559.pdf (page 6)

¹⁰ *Kaley v. United States*, 134 S. Ct. 1090, 188 L. Ed. 2d 46 (2014) [2014 BL 49923]

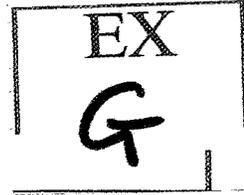
http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/publications/supreme_court_preview/briefs-v2/12-464_pet_amcu_gof-et-al.authcheckdam.pdf

See *Jeremiah* 1:53 ("Neither can they judge their own cause, nor redress a wrong, being unable...."); *Federalist No. 10* ("No man is allowed to be a judge in his own cause, because his interest would certainly bias his judgment, and, not improbably, corrupt his integrity."); 28 U.S.C. § 455.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

A copy of the foregoing Amended Writ of Error was sent by U.S. Mail on this 2, day of March, 2015 to:
Lynnette Dinkler, 5335 Far Hills Avenue, Suite 123, Dayton, Oh. 45429 (counsel for and Respondents)
Ohio Plan Risk Management Inc., (#OH1010268-P14) N. Courthouse Sq., 1000 Jackson St. Toledo, Oh. 43604





For Immediate Release

Wednesday, February 5, 2014 - 1:13pm

ACLU

Contact:

Nick Worner, Communications Coordinator,
ACLU of Ohio, 216-472-2220

Court Takes Swift Action to End Debtors' Prison

Ohio Supreme Court Creates Bench Card After ACLU Investigation Found Courts Jailing People Too Poor to Pay Fines

CLEVELAND, OH - Today, the Supreme Court of Ohio distributed a new "bench card" to all of the state's judges, giving much needed instructions to avoid the unconstitutional practice of sending people to jail when they owe the court fines and are unable to pay. The card lists the legal alternatives to jail, such as payment plans or forfeiting a driver's license, as well as outlining the procedure for determining someone's ability to pay.

"Debtors' prison are not only unconstitutional, they are a cruel albatross that traps low-income people in a never-ending cycle of poverty, debt, and incarceration. Those who have been jailed for being poor have lost jobs, seen serious declines in their health, and faced family crises," said ACLU of Ohio Director of Communications and Public Policy Mike Brickner. "We expect our courts to protect the vulnerable and seek justice. It is our hope that the Supreme Court of Ohio's actions today have moved our courts closer to fulfilling that vision."

The card results from *The Outskirts of Hope*, an ACLU of Ohio report that documented this unconstitutional practice in seven counties, and illustrated how debtors' prison ruins lives and costs taxpayers. Courts in Georgia, Washington State, and many other states also use debtors' prisons to collect fines. Ohio's bench card is the first of its kind in the country.

In conjunction with the report, the ACLU of Ohio sent a letter to Ohio Supreme Court Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor asking her to create a clear plan to end debtors' prisons in Ohio. The Chief Justice responded by holding a meeting with the ACLU and creating a plan to draft and distribute new instructions to courts across Ohio.

"Debtors' prisons are an outdated relic of the past, but have thrived in Ohio. Hopefully, the Supreme Court of Ohio's actions today will help ensure that no one else is illegally jailed

simply for being poor,” added Brickner. “It’s been over 30 years since the U.S. Supreme Court declared them unconstitutional. It is high time for Ohio to end debtors’ prisons altogether.”

According to the law, courts are required to hold hearings to determine a defendants’ financial status before jailing them for failure to pay fines. If requested, defendants must be provided with counsel for these hearings and the courts cannot jail the defendant if she is unable to pay. Nevertheless, the ACLU of Ohio found clear evidence that courts across the state have been routinely jailing people without regard to whether they could afford to pay their fines.

“No longer should there be any confusion about the fact that both U.S. Constitution and state law prohibit courts from jailing people for being too poor to pay their fines,” said Brickner. “Courts that are still engaging in debtors’ prison practices are on notice that they can no longer ignore the Constitution, and if they do so, our state Supreme Court is watching.”

More information about the ACLU of Ohio is available at:
acluohio.org

This press release is available at:
aclu.org/criminal-law-reform/court-takes-swift-action-end-debtors-prison

###

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) conserves America's original civic values working in courts, legislatures and communities to defend and preserve the individual rights and liberties guaranteed to every person in the United States by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Organization Links

[ACLU](#)

[ACLU \(Press Center\)](#)

[ACLU \(Action Center\)](#)



EX
G

Hon. Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor
Ohio Supreme Court
65 S. Front St.
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chief Justice O'Connor:

We write to express our concern that across Ohio, numerous courts have adopted a policy of jailing individuals who fail to pay fines and court costs, without conducting any hearing into their ability to pay or honoring their right to counsel. The ACLU of Ohio has received many complaints about this troubling, illegal, and unconstitutional practice, which leaves low-income Ohioans mired in modern-day debtors' prisons. Today, the ACLU is writing to seven courts around the state where we have found specific evidence that debtors' prisons practices are in use. We write to you, in your capacity as supervisor of the Ohio judiciary, Ohio Const. art. IV, § 05(A)(1), to urge you take corrective action.

The Constitutions of both Ohio and the United States of America prohibit the use of jail to compel the payment of debt. The Constitution of Ohio categorically states that "[n]o person shall be imprisoned for debt in any civil action." Article I § 15. This prohibition extends to court costs billed to defendants in criminal cases. *Strattman v. Studt*, 253 N.E.2d 749 (Ohio 1969). The United States Constitution likewise prohibits jailing defendants who are unable to pay fines assessed against them. *Williams v. Illinois*, 399 U.S. 235 (1970); *Tate v. Short*, 401 U.S. 395 (1971). While courts are permitted to incarcerate those who *willfully* refuse to pay fines, those who lack the resources to meet their court-imposed financial obligations cannot be incarcerated for failing to do so. To jail those who cannot afford to pay fines would produce an "impermissible discrimination that rests on ability to pay," forbidden by the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. *Williams*, 399 U.S. at 241, 244. Accordingly, the U.S. Supreme Court has made clear that no individual may be incarcerated for failure to pay fines unless the court first "inquire[s] into the reasons for the failure to pay." *Bearden v. Georgia*, 461 U.S. 660, 672 (1983).

The Ohio Revised Code codifies this constitutional command at § 2947.14. *See State v. Meyer*, 124 Ohio App. 3d 373, 377, 706 N.E.2d 378, 380 (1997) (noting § 2947.14 protects the rights guaranteed by *Williams* and *Tate*); *Alkire v. Irving*, 330 F.3d 802, 819 (6th Cir. 2003) (finding requirements of § 2947.14 and Fourteenth Amendment to be coextensive). It plainly prohibits incarceration for failure to pay a fine except where the court first conducts a hearing and determines that the defendant's failure to pay the fines imposed was willful. This section is both specific and comprehensive. It provides:

If a fine is imposed as a sentence or a part of a sentence, the court or magistrate that imposed the fine may order that the offender be committed to

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SHARES



the jail or workhouse until the fine is paid or secured to be paid, or the offender is otherwise legally discharged, *if the court or magistrate determines at a hearing that the offender is able, at that time, to pay the fine but refuses to do so.* The hearing required by this section shall be conducted at the time of sentencing.

Ohio Rev. Code § 2947.14(A) (emphasis added). Additionally, at a hearing into an individual's indigency status, "the offender has the right to be represented by counsel and to testify and present evidence as to the offender's ability to pay the fine." § 2947.14(B). This hearing must be "supported by findings of fact set forth in a judgment entry that indicate the offender's income, assets, and debts, as presented by the offender, and the offender's ability to pay." *Id.*

Unless these requirements are satisfied, the court may neither issue an arrest warrant for the debtor, § 2947.14(C), nor commit him to jail for failure to pay, § 2947.14(D). If, after a full § 2947.14 indigency hearing, a debtor's failure to pay is judged to be willful, the outstanding fine must be reduced by fifty dollars for each day of confinement. *Id.*

While the law leaves no doubt that constitutionally adequate indigency hearings are mandatory in this state, the ACLU has discovered that Ohioans unable to pay costs and fines are routinely, and often repeatedly, committed to jail through a process that lacks even the pretense of compliance with state and federal law. Our investigation, spurred by the complaints of individual, wrongfully-jailed Ohioans, reveals a deeply troubling pattern of conduct. In disregard of the requirements of *Bearden* and § 2947.14, courts across the state have adopted a policy of jailing defendants who fail to pay court costs and fines—without determining whether these defendants were too poor to pay their court-imposed debts. Some courts attempt to circumvent the requirements of § 2947.14 through the mechanism of civil contempt, although this practice is prohibited. *City of Alliance v. Kelly*, 548 N.E.2d 952 (Ohio Ct. App. 5th Dist. 1988) (prohibited with respect to fines); *In re Buffington*, 89 Ohio App. 3d 814 (1993) (prohibited with respect to costs).

The ACLU bases its conclusions on publicly available online docket reports, court records obtained under Ohio's Sunshine Law, in-person observation of court proceedings, and interviews with numerous Ohioans ensnared in this debtors' prison system. The results are dismaying. In the eleven counties investigated by the ACLU, at least seven courts regularly use jail time as punishment for inability to pay fines. There is no evidence that these courts conduct § 2947.14 hearings, as mandated by law. The following is an initial and non-exhaustive overview of the practices in these courts, based in part on public records covering the one and a half month period from July 15, 2012 to August 31, 2012:

- In Cuyahoga County, the Parma Municipal Court is systematically jailing individuals for failure to pay costs and fines, with more than 45 people jailed on these illegal charges during this one and a half month period. Each warrant used to arrest and jail an individual owing fines is clearly labeled "Warrant for Failure to Pay Fines," and online docket reports show that the court routinely assesses

further fees and charges against individuals struggling to pay their fines. There is no evidence that the Parma Court has conducted even a single § 2947.14 indigency hearing. Compounding this illegal policy, the Parma Court routinely fails to grant the fifty dollar credit required by § 2947.14(D) for each day spent in jail.

- In Erie County, during this same period, at least 75 people were jailed by the Sandusky Municipal Court for failure to pay fines. Booking reports from the Erie County Jail include "Fines Warrant" language and docket entries from the court explicitly state "Fine bench warrant issued on defendant." Even where individuals have been represented by the public defender in their underlying criminal proceedings as a result of indigency, the Court still jails them for failure to pay fines. Indeed, prominently placed signs inform all court visitors that "ALL FINES MUST BE PAID IN FULL IN ORDER FOR BENCH WARRANTS TO BE RECALLED." We have found no evidence that anyone received a § 2947.14 hearing or that those sentenced to jail receive the statutory credit against their fines for jail time.
- Booking reports and court dockets from Richland County's Mansfield Municipal Court show similar debtors' prison practices. During the same one and a half month period, at least five people were jailed for failure to pay court costs and fees, and these jailings lasted an average of about thirty days. Worse, individuals unable to pay their fines face not only this significant jail time, but an additional \$250 "contempt fine" added to the amount owed originally. The Mansfield Court does not consistently offer the required statutory credit against fines for jail time, and we have found no evidence that anyone has ever received a proper § 2947.14 hearing.
- In Warren County, both the Springboro Mayor's Court and the Springboro Police Department issue warrants which explicitly state that they are based on failure to pay fines and costs. Individuals struggling to meet their debt obligations face a punishing cycle of arrest warrants, "recall hearings," and jail time, with the Court jailing at least one person five times in twelve months. We have found no evidence that the Court has ever conducted a § 2947.14 indigency hearing—even for defendants who have sworn affidavits of indigency for public defense purposes.
- In Williams County, individuals who owe fines receive letters threatening them with contempt of court and jail time if they fail to make payments by a certain date. Court dockets state explicitly that a "warrant was issued for defendant for payment of fines," and the Court adds a \$25 warrant fee to the total amount owed when such an illegal warrant is issued. We have found no evidence that any of these individuals received the hearing required by § 2947.14.
- Hamilton County goes so far as to post their illegal policy on their website: Those who fail to pay on time "should expect to be arrested and incarcerated until the

fine is paid, or the jail time is done." See *How to Pay Fines*, available at <http://www.hamilton-co.org/municipalcourt/pay.htm>. The website makes no mention of the fact that those unable to pay will not be arrested or jailed. It further states that individuals jailed pursuant to this policy will be credited thirty dollars against their fines for each day served in jail, a credit that is substantially smaller than the fifty dollars required by § 2947.14(D).

Copies of the letters we are sending today to these courts are enclosed herewith.

We believe that with proper guidance from your office, Ohio's lower courts will take the steps required to ensure that all parties appearing before them enjoy the rights mandated by Ohio and federal law. Indeed, since the ACLU began a public investigation into these issues in the Norwalk Municipal Court, in Huron County, that court has substantially altered its treatment of low-income and indigent defendants. These changes were both long overdue and sorely needed—with no fewer than 256 people jailed for failing to pay costs and fines between May and October of 2012, Huron County stood out as the epicenter of debtors' prison practices in Ohio.

Previously, individuals who owed fines in the Norwalk Municipal Court encountered a perfunctory civil contempt proceeding that all but ensured jail time for those unable to pay promptly. Although facing imprisonment, they were not informed of their statutory and constitutional right to counsel. See § 2947.14; *Turner v. Rogers*, 131 S. Ct. 2507 (2011) (finding right to counsel in civil contempt proceeding based on unpaid child support, where party is never informed that ability to pay will be crucial question). Instead, they were simply informed of the total amount owed and, without any inquiry into their financial situations, assigned arbitrary monthly payment plans. They were then sentenced to ten-day jail terms suspended to several months in the future, which they served if they failed to timely pay in accordance with the often unaffordable schedule. Many individuals caught in this system remained in it for years, serving multiple ten-day sentences, often on the basis of fines from underlying offenses years or decades old.

Now, following the ACLU investigation, the Norwalk Municipal Court has undertaken some efforts to limit the most egregious of these practices. The Court has cancelled many contempt proceedings based on failure to pay fines and costs, and has, in many cases, ordered that individuals previously incarcerated for failure to pay fines and fees retroactively receive the statutory fifty dollars per day reduction in fines for the time they served in jail. These developments are positive, but still fall short of § 2974.14 standards: there is no evidence that the Court has conducted even a single § 2974.14-compliant indigency hearing, and it has not disavowed the practice of using contempt proceedings to collect fines and costs in the future.

The Ohio courts are a "system designed to aid the poorest members of our society." *Disciplinary Counsel v. Holland*, 106 Ohio St. 3d 372, 377 (2005). As this Court has recognized, ignoring the obligations of § 2947.14 causes grave damage to this principle. *Ohio State Bar Assn. v. Goldie*, 119 Ohio St. 3d 428, 431 (2008) (disciplining judge for failure to follow "procedures required to determine [a defendant's] ability to

pay assessed fines before sending him to jail"). Moreover, the use of debtors' prisons is not a sensible use of limited taxpayer money. In the jurisdictions described above, the daily confinement costs range from fifty-five to seventy-five dollars, so the costs of incarcerating an impoverished defendant multiple times will frequently exceed the small amount of money the court could ever successfully collect from that person.

Accordingly, we respectfully request that you take the corrective action needed to bring the practices of Ohio's lower courts into compliance with Ohio and federal law, through the promulgation of an Administrative Order, rule of practice or procedure, or other appropriate form of uniform guidance. Ohio's constitution vests this Court with powers of "general superintendence over all courts of the state," Ohio Const. art. IV, §5(A), and, pursuant to this power, we urge you to take appropriate measures to ensure that all of Ohio's lower court judges properly discharge their judicial responsibilities. Ohio Code of Judicial Conduct. Rule 2.12(B).

We thank you for your attention to this important matter. We are available to meet at your convenience in order to discuss it further.

Sincerely,



Christine Link
Executive Director
ACLU of Ohio



Rachel Goodman
Staff Attorney
ACLU Racial Justice
Program



Eric Balaban
Senior Staff Counsel
ACLU National Prison
Project

Enclosures.

The Supreme Court of Ohio

65 SOUTH FRONT STREET, COLUMBUS, OH 43215-3431

CHIEF JUSTICE
MAUREEN O'CONNOR

JUSTICES
PAUL E. PFEIFER
TERRENCE O'DONNELL
JUDITH ANN LANZINGER
SHARON L. KENNEDY
JUDITH L. FRENCH
WILLIAM M. O'NEILL



CHIEF JUSTICE
MAUREEN O'CONNOR

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April 3, 2013

Christina Link, Executive Director
American Civil Liberties Union of Ohio
4506 Chester Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44103-3621

Dear Ms. Link,

Thank you for your letter of April 3 detailing the findings of the ACLU of Ohio's recent investigation into complaints regarding certain Ohio courts' practices concerning individuals who fail to pay fines and court costs.

While not able to discuss with specificity the cases you mention in your letter, you do cite a matter that can and must receive further attention.

As you reference in your letter, the Supreme Court has general superintendence authority regarding local courts. Under this authority and in my capacity as the Chief Justice, I will take a close look at the information you have presented in your letter.

I appreciate the work of the ACLU of Ohio, and it is clear that your organization has put a lot of care and effort into this investigation. In particular, I appreciate your offer to be available to meet in person to discuss the findings of your investigation. I would like to take you up on this offer at your earliest convenience. My administrative assistant will be contacting your office to arrange a meeting.

Thank you for sharing your concerns with me, and I look forward to meeting with you soon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Maureen O'Connor".

Maureen O'Connor
Chief Justice