



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Justin Tjaden Files Lawsuit to Challenge Unfair Ballot Access Laws in Ohio**

**Chardon, OH** – Today, Justin Tjaden, an Independent candidate for Ohio House District 99, has taken a significant step towards ensuring fair electoral practices by filing a lawsuit against the Geauga County Board of Elections. This legal action, which includes a motion for a Temporary Restraining Order and Preliminary Injunction, as well as a Complaint for Declaratory Judgment, challenges the constitutionality of Ohio's ballot access requirements for independent candidates.

The lawsuit addresses critical disparities in the signature requirements for independent candidates compared to those affiliated with major political parties. Currently, independent candidates like Mr. Tjaden are required to gather disproportionately higher numbers of signatures to qualify for the ballot—a requirement that Mr. Tjaden argues severely burdens independent candidates and restricts voter choice – especially when major party opponents, like his, never faced a challenger in their primary election.

"This lawsuit isn't just about my candidacy," said Justin Tjaden. "It's about standing up for the democratic values that allow every voice to be heard in our electoral process. The current laws unfairly penalize independent candidates who bring critical perspectives and choices to our elections. We have a chance in Ohio to recognize the current system isn't working, and it starts in District 99."

The legal challenge comes after the Geauga County Board of Elections indicated that it would not certify Mr. Tjaden for the November ballot due to an alleged shortfall in valid signatures. The lawsuit contends that these requirements violate both the Ohio and United States Constitutions by imposing undue burdens on the rights of candidates and voters alike.

Mr. Tjaden's legal action seeks to prevent the Board from certifying the election results until the court can review the constitutional issues presented. He

emphasizes the urgency of this matter, with the potential certification decision looming at the Board's special meeting scheduled for April 9, 2024.

"We are asking the court to uphold fundamental principles of fairness and to ensure that independent candidates are given an equal opportunity to compete," Mr. Tjaden added. "The public's trust in our electoral system depends on it."

The case highlights broader issues of electoral integrity and the need for reforms that support a more inclusive and representative political landscape. Mr. Tjaden calls upon the residents of District 99 and supporters of democracy across Ohio to join him in this critical fight for fairness and representation.

For more information about the lawsuit and to support our efforts, please visit [www.tjadenforohio.com](http://www.tjadenforohio.com).

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