

News Release

**Honorable Susan Baker Ross, Presiding Judge
Summit County Court of Common Pleas
General Division**



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ADVOCACY TO EXPAND JURY POOL RECEIVES UNANIMOUS SUPPORT FROM SUMMIT COUNTY COURT OF COMMON PLEAS GENERAL DIVISION

Summit County, Ohio: *Summit County Court of Common Pleas* announced today their plan to expand the sources for which jurors are drawn for both petit and grand jury. The Court currently draws jurors' names from the Summit County Board of Elections' list of existing registered voters. Under the new plan, the Court will add the Bureau of Motor Vehicles list of licensed drivers and state ID holders. Summit County Council President Veronica Sims initially presented the idea to the Court and later made a subsequent presentation with Councilwoman Erin Dickinson.

"The Ohio Revised Code allows courts to draw jurors from both sources. We all agreed with President Sims that we would take this next step to involve more of our Summit County residents in the justice system." said Presiding Judge Baker Ross.

Sims shared, *"as we, both here locally and across the country, seek ways to enhance the effectiveness of our criminal justice system, it is critical to expand the juror pool to include a more diverse representation throughout the entire deliberation process, especially as it relates to black and brown communities."* She went on to say, *"...having more diversity and thought based on both learned and lived experiences could bring important perspectives and understanding that we could be missing due to current limitations."* Councilwoman Dickinson added *"Expanding and diversifying the jury pool is an important step to ensuring that our citizens are guaranteed their Constitutional rights to a true jury of their peers."*

The Court expects this new source list to be ready for use in September, and also has plans to work collaboratively in an effort to educate residents about the importance of serving on a jury.

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