

# OHIO AUDITOR OF STATE KEITH FABER



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February 23, 2026

**VIA USPS:**

Ms. Mary Ruth Shumway  
Executive Director, Geauga County CASA  
470 Center Street, Bldg. 5-C  
Chardon, OH 44024

Re: Use of Public Funds-Candidate Endorsement

Dear Ms. Shumway:

The Ohio Auditor of State (“AOS”) has been advised that you may have inappropriately engaged in a campaign practice in violation of Ohio law in support of a candidate on the primary election ballot May 5, 2026.

We have received information that you used Geauga County CASA letterhead for a letter supporting the candidacy of Magistrate Abbey King for Geauga County Juvenile/Probate Judge and was transmitted using a county email address, and which is intended to influence the outcome of the upcoming election.

R.C.9.03(D) provides in pertinent part that “no person shall knowingly conduct a direct or indirect transaction of public funds to the benefit of [a] ... candidate.”

Accordingly, I am writing to advise you of AOS’s knowledge of the alleged campaign practice and to call your attention to the statutory provision above. We have not confirmed the accuracy of these allegations. Please be aware that if they are true, the activity needs to cease and desist immediately.

For your awareness, by clicking [Ohio Auditor of State Levy FAQ.pdf](#) you can access the full Auditor of State’s Levy FAQs, which is a helpful tool that provides guidance regarding compliance with Ohio law.

All information about this matter is being forwarded to AOS regional staff for review in the county’s next regular audit. If you or the county’s legal counsel has any questions, or if you would like to discuss this matter further, please, do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,

KEITH FABER  
Auditor of State

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tiffany L. Ridenbaugh". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "T".

Tiffany L. Ridenbaugh, CPA, CGFM, CFE  
Chief Deputy Auditor

cc: James Flaiz, Geauga County Prosecutor  
Christopher Berger, President, Hearts & Hands of CASA Geauga County Board of  
Directors  
Allen Allred, Northeast Region Chief Auditor