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S.B. 286
135th General Assembly

Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

[Click here for S.B. 286's Bill Analysis](#)

Version: As Reported by Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources

Primary Sponsor: Sen. Wilkin

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: No

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Highlights

- The bill creates the 11-member Ohio River Commission within the Department of Development (DEV). The members would be reimbursed for their actual and necessary expenses. The main purpose of the Commission would be to promote and develop a master plan for Ohio River infrastructure, including transportation projects.
- The bill requires the Commission to maintain an office in Columbus and hire at least two employees. Annual personnel costs for these administrators could range from nearly \$130,000 to approximately \$300,000 for an Executive Director 1 and Administrative Professional 2, including retirement and health care benefits.
- The bill establishes the Ohio River Commission Fund to cover operating costs, and specifies that sources of income may include the proceeds from any sale, transfer, or lease of property, as well as grants from the U.S. government. In addition, the bill authorizes DEV to identify amounts from its budget that can be used to support the Commission.

Detailed Analysis

The bill creates the 11-member Ohio River Commission within the Department of Development (DEV) to promote economic development and infrastructure along the waterway by issuing grants and loans and carrying out other specified functions. Specifically, the bill requires the Commission to employ an executive director, a secretary-treasurer, and other employees that the Commission needs to carry out its functions. Annual payroll costs for an Executive Director 1 and an Administrative Professional 2 under the state's job classification plan could range from nearly \$130,000 to approximately \$300,000. This includes the state's share of the employees' retirement and coverage for either single or family health care coverage. Also under the bill, the Commission must maintain a principal office in Columbus and may maintain

regional sub-offices at locations properly designated by the Commission. DEV may be able to house the Commission in Columbus using existing office space. Members of the Commission would be reimbursed for their expenses in carrying out their official duties. Finally, the bill requires other state entities, in particular DEV and the Ohio Department of Transportation, to offer research and data to support the Commission's mission.

The bill allows the Commission to issue grants and loans for the development of Ohio River infrastructure or for continuing or instituting Ohio River transportation in Ohio. Under the bill, the Controlling Board must approve any expenditures by DEV, the Commission, or any other state agency for capital improvements to promote economic development, marine cargo terminal operations, and travel and tourism on the Ohio River and its tributaries. To fund these various economic development activities, the bill creates the Ohio River Commission Fund which consists of money received from any sale, transfer, or lease of property. Additionally, the bill allows DEV to use any appropriate source of revenue to assist the Commission in its work. The bill also permits the Commission to apply for grants from the U.S. government for the benefit of Ohio River infrastructure, transportation, or recreation and tourism.