



www.lsc.ohio.gov

OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

Office of Research
and Drafting

Legislative Budget
Office

H.B. 274
136th General Assembly

Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

[Click here for H.B. 274's Bill Analysis](#)

Version: As Introduced

Primary Sponsors: Reps. D. Thomas and T. Hall

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: Yes

Jared Cape, Budget Analyst

Highlights

- Certain political subdivisions will incur costs to either provide or contract for fire services and emergency medical services (EMS), if they do not do so already. These costs will vary widely by community size and service level.
- Some political subdivisions may experience savings or additional revenues under the bill as they respond to fewer calls outside their jurisdiction or are now contracted to cover these areas.
- The Fire and EMS Shared Services Reimbursement Grant Program established by the bill may offset up to \$100,000 of expenses incurred to provide or contract for fire services and EMS through a one-time grant. The bill does not establish any new appropriations to support this program.

Detailed Analysis

The bill would (1) require townships and municipal corporations to provide fire-fighting services and emergency medical services (EMS) beginning January 1, 2026, and (2) establish the Fire and EMS Shared Services Reimbursement Grant Program.

Fire-fighting services and emergency medical services

The bill requires townships and municipal corporations (cities and villages) to provide fire-fighting services and EMS. Presumably, most of the specified political subdivisions either (1) directly provide these services, (2) contract with another entity for these services, or (3) provide services through joint districts in collaboration with other political subdivisions. Therefore, most of the specified political subdivisions would not experience any direct fiscal effect. However, any specified political subdivision that currently does not provide, nor contract

for, these services would incur new costs to comply with the requirements of the bill. Any such potential costs will vary widely by community size and service level. Political subdivisions that are called to respond to emergencies in areas that do not have dedicated fire services and EMS, nor a contract for those services, currently pay those costs. The bill's requirements would shift that cost burden to those areas receiving services. The magnitude of these costs would depend on the number and scope of emergencies responded to in these uncovered areas. Furthermore, the bill establishes a grant program to assist in offsetting these costs now incurred by political subdivisions that would now be required to take on these costs.

Overall, the state has 1,178 fire departments and 1,499 EMS entities. Despite outreach to applicable state agencies, organizations representing these political subdivisions, and other applicable industry groups, the Ohio Legislative Service Commission (LSC) was unable to identify a comprehensive list of political subdivisions that would be impacted. However, through discussions with these entities, it appears that there are very few political subdivisions that do not provide, nor contract for fire and EMS services. It also appears any such instances would likely occur in the unincorporated areas of townships. Finally, it should be noted that the bill does not contain any penalty or enforcement provisions for any political subdivisions that do not either provide or procure these services.

Fire and EMS Shared Services Reimbursement Grant Program

The bill establishes the Fire and EMS Shared Services Reimbursement Grant Program. The State Fire Marshal may incur costs to administer the program and provide grants to townships and municipal corporations that share fire services and/or EMS. The grants are subject to the availability of funds; the bill does not include an appropriation. Presumably, the program would be supported through any available funding under the State Fire Marshal's Fund (Fund 5460).

Each eligible township or municipal corporation would apply independently and can receive one grant to reimburse 50% of its eligible expenses, up to \$100,000. This includes equipment, training, or personnel expenses incurred within the year after joining the district (or a regional council of governments, RCOG) or entering into the contract; the reimbursement also can include expenses related to joining the district/RCOG or entering into a contract, including related election expenses. A township or municipal corporation is eligible to receive a grant if, on or after January 1, 2026, the township or municipal corporation joins a new or existing district/RCOG, or enters a new contract for joint services with another governmental entity (the contract cannot be substantially similar to an existing or recently expired contract). A township or municipal corporation must apply for the grant during its second year of participating in the joint services.