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# OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

Office of Research  
and Drafting

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Office

**H.B. 359**  
**136<sup>th</sup> General Assembly**

## Bill Analysis

**Version:** As Introduced

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. C. Thomas and Gross

Ashley F. Dean, Attorney

### SUMMARY

- Clarifies that if a missing child has autism spectrum disorder or another developmental disability, the local law enforcement agency must notify the statewide emergency alert program immediately.
- Names the alert for a missing child who has autism spectrum disorder or another developmental disability the Joshua Alert.

### DETAILED ANALYSIS

#### Joshua Alert

Under continuing law, the statewide emergency alert program for a missing individual who has a mental impairment, has autism spectrum disorder or another developmental disability, or is 65 years old or older, will be implemented only if all of the following activation criteria are met:<sup>1</sup>

- The local investigating law enforcement agency confirms that the individual is missing.
- The individual is 65 years old or older, has a mental impairment, or has either autism spectrum disorder or another developmental disability.
- The disappearance of the individual poses a credible threat of immediate danger of serious bodily harm or death to the individual.
- There is sufficient descriptive information about the individual and the circumstances surrounding the individual's disappearance to indicate that activation of the alert will help locate the individual.

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<sup>1</sup> R.C. 5502.522(B).

A local investigating law enforcement agency is generally not required to notify the statewide emergency alert program that the law enforcement agency has received information that meets the activation criteria listed above during the first 24 hours after the agency receives the information. Under the bill, if the missing individual is under 18 years old, and has either autism spectrum disorder or another developmental disability, the local investigating law enforcement agency must immediately notify the statewide emergency alert program that the agency has received information that meets the activation criteria.<sup>2</sup>

The bill names the alert for a missing child who has autism spectrum disorder or another developmental disability the Joshua Alert.<sup>3</sup>

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## HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	06-12-25

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<sup>2</sup> R.C. 5502.522(E).

<sup>3</sup> Section 3.