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H.B. 184*

136th General Assembly

Bill Analysis

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Version: As Re-reported by Senate Finance

Primary Sponsors: Reps. Stewart and T. Mathews

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SUMMARY

Contracts with intercollegiate athletes

- Prohibits any person from entering into a contract with an intercollegiate athlete that compensates the athlete for the athlete's name, image, or likeness (NIL) if it remains in effect or requires the athlete to provide future compensation or rights associated with the use of the athlete's NIL after the athlete's intercollegiate athletic eligibility ends.
- Prohibits any person from entering into a contract with an intercollegiate athlete that compensates the athlete for the athlete's NIL if it requires any litigation, arbitration, or other dispute resolution process arising from the contract to occur in another state.
- Requires a contract that provides an intercollegiate athlete with compensation for use of the athlete's NIL to require any litigation, arbitration, or other dispute resolution process arising from the contract to take place in Ohio and be governed by Ohio law.
- Requires the parties to any NIL contract involving an intercollegiate athlete who transfers to an Ohio institution from another state to ensure that the contract continues at the new institution.
- Prohibits an athlete agent from entering into a fee agreement that requires an athlete to provide future compensation or rights associated with the use of the athlete's NIL after the athlete's intercollegiate athletic eligibility ends.
- Prohibits an athlete agent from entering into an agent contract under which the athlete agent represents an athlete in relation to contracts or legal matters regarding

* This analysis was prepared before the report of the Senate Finance Committee appeared in the Senate Journal. Note that the legislative history may be incomplete.

opportunities to earn compensation for use of the athlete's NIL if the agent contract remains in effect after the athlete's intercollegiate athletic eligibility ends.

- Specifies that NIL includes "personal services."
- Applies the bill to contracts and agreements entered into on or after the bill's effective date.

Nursing facility quality incentive payments

- For purposes of determining the total amount spent on Medicaid quality incentive payments in a year for nursing facilities, specifies that the calculation utilizes 60% of the per diem amount a nursing facility's *cost per case-mix unit* changed as a result of rebasing, instead of 60% of the per diem amount the facility's *rate for direct care costs* changed.
- Clarifies that for purposes of this calculation, a nursing facility's cost per case-mix unit is determined under continuing law and must not be multiplied by the facility's semiannual case-mix score.
- Declares the General Assembly's intent in making the above changes.

Cap on school district administrative expenses

- Excludes educational service center governing boards from the prohibition on any school district board of education spending more than 15% of its annual operating budget on administrative expenses.

Montgomery County Pupil Transportation Program

- Permits the educational service center serving the Montgomery County Pupil Transportation Pilot Program to transport a student to and from that student's workplace learning experiences.

Science of reading implementation report

- Requires, by June 30 each year, the Department of Education and Workforce to prepare and issue a report regarding the implementation of the law regarding the Science of Reading in public schools.

School emergency management plans

- Corrects the licensing body of a preschool program or school-age childcare program from the Department of Education and Workforce to the Department of Children and Youth in the law regarding school emergency management plans.

State institution of higher education facility inspection reports

- Requires each state institution of higher education to submit any inspection report it receives of one of its existing facilities to the Chancellor of Higher Education and the Department of Administrative Services.

- Requires the Department of Administrative Services to post on its website a copy of each inspection report and, if there are issues in the facility that require remediation, a cost estimate of that remediation.

Accelerated College and Career Pathways Program

- Clarifies that the accelerated 90-hour degree programs that each state university must establish are 90 *semester credit* hour degree programs.

Percent for Arts Program

- Establishes a maximum upper limit of $200,000 for funds that a state agency must spend on artwork under the Percent for Arts Program.

Temporary property tax abatements

- Permits Franklin County or certain local governments therein to temporarily apply for an abatement of delinquent property taxes on a multi-level parking garage owned or leased by the applicant without regard to continuing law's payment limitations.

Historic rehabilitation tax credits – rescinded awards

- Allows a project that was awarded a historic rehabilitation tax credit during a period that allowed an increased credit and that had approval rescinded to benefit from the increased credit on a new award even though that increased credit is no longer available generally.

Public Records Law exemptions

- Exempts from the Public Records Law certain information submitted to a political subdivision for economic development assistance purposes.

- Specifies that information gained as a result of returns, investigations, hearings, or verifications required or authorized under Municipal Income Tax Law is not a public record under the Public Records Law.

Tax increment financing extensions

- Authorizes a local government, under certain circumstances, to extend the term of a tax increment financing exemption for up to 30 additional years.

Mass transit for student transportation

- Beginning July 1, 2026, authorizes a city, local, or exempted village school district located in certain counties with a local mass transit system to arrange for student transportation services for the district's students in 9th through 12th grade via the mass transit system.

- Requires any school district that arranges for the mass transit student transportation described above to ensure both of the following:
  - The students are assigned to a route that does not require them to make more than one transfer; and
  - That any transfer does not occur at the mass transit system's central transfer hub.

Surety liability for Brent Spence Bridge projects

- Limits the liability of a surety on a contract performance bond to 115% of the value of the bond, with respect to additional costs reasonably incurred by the Director of Transportation (ODOT Director) for completion of a project, if all the following apply:
  - The contract relates to a major bridge project over the Ohio River (i.e., the Brent Spence Bridge project);
  - The surety made a written offer to the ODOT Director within ten days of the contractor defaulting on the contract to complete the work covered by the contract; and
  - The surety failed or refused to complete the work covered by the contract.

Department of Public Safety

Accessible parking placard

- Removes the fee associated with obtaining a duplicate removable windshield placard when the original is lost, destroyed, or mutilated.

Commercial driver's licenses for noncitizens

- Requires a commercial driver's license that is issued to a legally present noncitizen of the U.S. to include a prominent statement with the words "Non-Domiciled Commercial Driver's License" printed on the license.

Driver's license fees for disabled veterans

- Expands which disabled veterans are exempt from paying driver's license-related fees by exempting a veteran who has a service-connected disability that is compensated at 100% by the U.S. Veterans Administration in the same manner as if the veteran has a disability rating of 100%.

Driver's education and supervised driving requirements

- Exempts the following limited term license applicants from the associated driver's education and supervised driving requirements:
  - An applicant who holds a valid, unexpired visa and a valid, unexpired foreign driver's license who presents a form attesting to the applicant's relationship with a hospital or health system; and
  - An applicant who holds a valid, unexpired H-2A visa (temporary agricultural worker) and presents a form attesting to the applicant's employment by an Ohio farm.
- Expands who qualifies as an eligible adult to supervise the actual driving experience of an emancipated adult to include any person 21 or older who holds a valid Ohio driver's license or commercial driver's license.

Attorney unclaimed funds

- Exempts attorney unclaimed funds reported on or before January 1, 2026, from escheating to the state.
- Permits the General Assembly to appropriate funds to the Ohio Access to Justice Foundation to cover attorney unclaimed funds that escheat to the state.
- Appropriates to the Ohio Access to Justice Foundation $19,500 in FY 2026 and $90,500 in FY 2027 and transfers $110,000 from GRF to the newly created Access to Justice Unclaimed Funds Fund.

Private insurance outreach program

- Repeals duplicative language requiring the Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM), during FY 2027, to create and administer an outreach program to provide information, awareness, and assistance to Medicaid recipients to help them transition from Medicaid to private insurance.

Rural Practice Incentive Program

- Updates the time admitted to the practice of law in Ohio from less than eight years to less than 12 years for the application to participate in the Rural Practice Incentive Program.

Publicly funded child care payments

- Extends to July 9, 2028 (from July 5, 2026), the date by which the Department of Children and Youth is required to calculate publicly funded child care payments based on a child's enrollment with a child care provider rather than on the child's attendance.

Early Childhood Education Grant Program

- Specifies that a grant awarded under the Department of Children and Youth's Early Childhood Education Grant Program is not publicly funded child care or a family services program.

Ohio Post-Traumatic Stress Fund

- Transfers responsibility for the Ohio Post-Traumatic Stress Fund from the OBM Director to the Director of Public Safety.
- Specifies, for purposes of coverage under the fund, that the phrase "public safety officer" includes peace officers, firefighters, and state-certified emergency medical workers, whether paid or volunteer.
- Requires the OBM Director to transfer $40 million cash from the GRF to the fund in FY 2027.

Other appropriations

- Makes other appropriations.

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DETAILED ANALYSIS

Contracts with intercollegiate athletes

The bill prohibits persons and athlete agents from entering into certain types of contracts with an intercollegiate athlete that involve the use of the athlete's name, image, or likeness (NIL).

The bill specifies that, for purposes of the law governing intercollegiate athlete NIL, "NIL" includes "personal services." "Personal services" means services performed by an intercollegiate athlete to which both of the following apply:

- The services are nondelegable obligations for which the athlete cannot substitute another individual to fulfill the duties agreed upon by the athlete under the contract, and the services must be rendered personally by that athlete;
- The services involve skill-based or talent-based performance by the athlete, and the contract is formed due to the athlete's specific athletic ability, status as an athlete, public persona, or brand recognition.[1]

Under current law, NIL is not defined, so it is unclear whether personal services may be covered under NIL.

Contracts for use of an athlete's NIL

The bill prohibits any person from entering into a contract with an intercollegiate athlete that compensates the athlete for the use of the athlete's NIL if the contract:

- Remains in effect beyond the date the athlete is no longer eligible to participate in intercollegiate athletics;
- Requires the athlete to provide as consideration:
  - Any compensation the athlete may earn after the athlete is no longer eligible to participate in intercollegiate athletics for use of the athlete's NIL; or
  - Rights associated with the use of the athlete's NIL after the athlete is no longer eligible to participate in intercollegiate athletics.
- Requires any litigation, arbitration, or other dispute resolution process arising from the contract to occur in another state.

Additionally, a NIL contract must require any litigation, arbitration, or other dispute resolution process arising from the contract to take place in Ohio and be governed by Ohio law. The bill also requires the parties to a NIL contract involving an intercollegiate athlete who transfers to an Ohio institution from another state to ensure that the contract continues at the new institution.

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[1] R.C. 3376.01, with conforming changes in R.C. 4771.021 and 4771.12.

The parties to any NIL contract must ensure that contract complies with the bill's provisions discussed above. A contract entered into on or after the bill's effective date in violation of the provisions discussed above is void.[2]

Athlete agent prohibitions

The bill prohibits an athlete agent from entering into a fee agreement that requires an intercollegiate athlete to provide as consideration:

- Any compensation the athlete may earn after the athlete is no longer eligible to participate in intercollegiate athletics for use of the athlete's NIL; or
- Rights associated with the use of the athlete's NIL after the athlete is no longer eligible to participate in intercollegiate athletics.[3]

An athlete agent also cannot enter into an agent contract with an athlete under which the athlete agent represents the athlete in relation to contracts or legal matters regarding opportunities to earn compensation for use of the athlete's NIL if the agent contract remains in effect beyond the date the athlete is no longer eligible to participate in intercollegiate athletics.[4] Any agent contract entered into on or after the bill's effective date in violation of this prohibition is void.[5]

An agent contract under continuing law is any contract under which an athlete authorizes an athlete agent to:

- Market, or enter an agreement to market, an athlete or an athlete's reputation;
- Negotiate or solicit an agreement with a professional sports team for the athlete's employment with the team; or
- Negotiate or solicit an agreement for the athlete's employment as a professional athlete.[6]

Nursing facility quality incentive payments

Quality incentive payment calculation

Under Ohio law, a nursing facility's per Medicaid day payment rate includes a quality incentive payment component, which is determined through a statutory formula. The formula specifies how the Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM) must calculate each nursing facility's score, as well as the total amount to be spent on quality incentive payments in each fiscal year. Under current law, this calculation includes determining an amount that is 60% of the per diem amount by which a nursing facility's ***rate for direct care costs*** changed as a result of the last

[2] R.C. 3376.14; Section 3.

[3] R.C. 4771.12.

[4] R.C. 4771.021.

[5] R.C. 4771.04, not in the bill; Section 3.

[6] R.C. 4771.01, not in the bill.

rebasing. Under current law, to calculate a nursing facility's rate for direct care costs, ODM must multiply:

1. The cost per case-mix unit for the nursing facility's peer group (similarly situated facilities); by
2. The nursing facility's semiannual case-mix score (this score reflects the complexity of facility residents).

The bill specifies that the quality incentive payment calculation instead uses the amount that is 60% of the per diem amount by which the facility's ***cost per case-mix unit*** changed as a result of rebasing.

Additionally, the bill clarifies that, for purposes of this calculation, a nursing facility's cost per case-mix unit must be calculated in accordance with continuing law unchanged by the bill, and must not be multiplied by a facility's case-mix score (as in the calculation for the rate for direct care costs above).[7]

Legislative intent

The bill declares that it is the intent of the General Assembly, in making the changes described above, to:[8]

- Clarify statutory language in response to the decision of the Ohio Supreme Court in *State ex rel. LeadingAge Ohio v. Ohio Department of Medicaid*;[9]
- Require ODM to continue calculating and paying quality incentive payments in the manner they were actually paid for fiscal years 2024 and 2025;
- Acknowledge that ODM calculated the quality incentive pool in the way the General Assembly originally intended.

Cap on school district administrative expenses

The bill excludes educational service center (ESCs) governing boards from the prohibition on any school district board of education spending more than 15% of its annual operating budget on administrative expenses. It does so by narrowing the application of that law so that it only applies to city, local, exempted village, and joint vocational school districts.[10]

Generally, under continuing law, any law in Ohio's Education Code that applies to a "school district" or "board of education" without referring to a specific type of district must be construed to include ESCs and their governing boards.[11]

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[7] R.C. 5165.26(E)(1)(a).

[8] R.C. 5165.26(H).

[9] Slip Opinion No. 2025-Ohio-3066.

[10] R.C. 3315.063.

[11] R.C. 3311.055, not in the bill. Ohio's Education Code is R.C. Title 33.

Montgomery County Pupil Transportation Program

The bill permits the educational service center (ESC) serving the Montgomery County Pupil Transportation Pilot Program to transport a student to and from that student's workplace learning experiences, in addition to a student's place of residence as under continuing law.

H.B. 96 of the 136th General Assembly, effective September 30, 2025, extended the operation of the Montgomery County Pupil Transportation Pilot Program to the 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 school years. Under the pilot program, an ESC provides transportation to qualifying students in lieu of the students receiving transportation from their resident school district.[12]

Science of reading implementation report

The bill requires, by June 30 each year, the Department of Education and Workforce to prepare and issue a report to the Governor and the General Assembly regarding the implementation of the law regarding the Science of Reading in public schools.[13]

School emergency management plans

Under current law for school emergency management plans, the Department of Education and Workforce is listed as the licensing body for a preschool program or school-age childcare program. The bill corrects this to the Department of Children and Youth.[14]

State institution of higher education facility inspection reports

The bill requires each state institution of higher education to submit certain facility inspection reports to the Chancellor of Higher Education and the Department of Administrative Services. Specifically, a state institution must submit any inspection report it receives from an Ohio Building or Fire Code inspection of an existing building or structure under its control or controlled by a private entity on its behalf. The Department must then post a copy of each report in a prominent location on its website, alongside a cost estimate for the remediation of any issues identified in the report.[15]

Accelerated College and Career Pathways Program

H.B. 96 of the 136th General Assembly, effective September 30, 2025, established the Accelerated College and Career Pathways Program, under which each state university must establish at least one accelerated 90-hour degree program aligned to an in-demand career area by the 2027-2028 academic year. The bill clarifies that the 90-hour degree programs are 90 *semester credit* hour degree programs.[16]

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[12] Section 265.550 of H.B. 33 of the 135th General Assembly.

[13] R.C. 3313.6028.

[14] R.C. 5502.262.

[15] R.C. 3345.111.

[16] R.C. 3333.97 and 3345.89

Percent for Arts Program

Under current law, when a state agency spends more than $4 million to construct or renovate a public building, 1% of the state money appropriated for the project, or 1% of the state bonds, notes, or other obligations sold for the project, must be used to purchase works of art from the Ohio Arts Council for display in or on the building. This requirement is known as the "Percent for Arts Program."

Under the bill, a state agency must spend on artwork the lesser of 1% of the state money appropriated for the project or 1% of the state bonds, notes, or other obligations sold for the project, or $200,000, limiting the required spending to a maximum of $200,000. The bill specifies that the new spending limit takes effect on spending on and after the bill's effective date.[17]

Temporary property tax abatements

The bill establishes a temporary procedure by which Franklin County or a municipal corporation, new community authority, or port authority in Franklin County may apply for a tax exemption for the property and abatement of any unpaid taxes, penalties, and interest that became a lien on a multi-level off-street parking structure owned or leased by the applicant. The application for exemption and abatement must be filed with the Department of Taxation within 12 months of the bill's 90-day effective date.[18]

Continuing law generally only allows a tax exemption if the property in question is exempt from taxation on the tax lien date, which is January 1 each year, and all taxes, penalties, and interest have been paid in full before the property was acquired by the exempt user. Delinquent taxes accruing after that point may be abated, but only if they are delinquent for less than three years and they accrued after the applicant acquired the property.[19]

Historic rehabilitation tax credits – rescinded awards

The Ohio historic preservation tax credit offers owners and long-term lessees of qualifying historically designated buildings state tax credits equal to a percentage of qualified rehabilitation expenses, typically for a credit up to $5 million. The tax credit is partially refundable and can be applied against the financial institution, foreign or domestic insurance premium, or income tax.

Under an expired provision of law, projects that were awarded historic rehabilitation tax credits between September 13, 2022, and July 1, 2024, could claim a credit up to $10 million and that increased credit was fully refundable. The temporary provision also increased the percentage of expenses that could qualify for the credit to 35% if any county, township, or municipal corporation within which the project was located had a population of less than 300,000. The bill allows a project that was awarded a historic rehabilitation tax credit during the September 13, 2022, to July 1, 2024, window but that had that award rescinded to benefit from

[17] R.C. 3379.10.

[18] Section 4.

[19] R.C. 5713.08 and 5713.081, not in the bill.

the expired provisions allowing an increased and fully refundable award if the project is awarded a new credit on a subsequent application.

It also allows the increased percentage to apply if the project is located in a township, county, or municipal corporation with a population less than 300,000. A new provision of permanent law, enacted in the budget, similarly allows 35% of expenses to account for a credit if a project is located in a municipal corporation with a population of 300,000 or less or the unincorporated area of a township.[20]

Public Records Law exemptions

Economic development assistance

Under the bill, information submitted to a political subdivision, a port authority, or a tax incentive review council, from an applicant for or recipient of economic development assistance, or of any grant, subgrant, exemption, credit, loan, award, cooperative agreement, or other similar and related form of financial assistance, and any information taken for any purpose from that information, is confidential and not a public record under the Public Records Law. The bill allows the entity to use that information to the extent required to secure approval of an application and to comply with specific mandates imposed under law.[21]

Municipal Income Tax Law

The bill specifies that information gained as a result of returns, investigations, hearings, or verifications required or authorized under Municipal Income Tax Law is not a public record under the Public Records Law. Under current law, such information is designated as confidential but is not specifically exempted from the Public Records Law.[22]

Tax increment financing extensions

Under continuing law, a county, township, or municipal corporation may adopt a resolution exempting certain property from property taxation through a method known as tax increment financing (TIF). There are two types of TIF resolutions that a local government may adopt – either exempting individual parcels or groups of parcels, or exempting a collection of parcels in an "incentive district" (these are often referred to as a "project TIF" or an "incentive district TIF," respectively).

All or a portion of the increased value of real property subject to a TIF is exempt from property tax for up to ten years or, with the approval of the school district, up to 30 years. School districts may condition their approval on receiving payments from the property owner compensating the district for forgone property taxes. In lieu of property taxes, the owner of TIF property is generally required to make service payments to the local government that designated

[20] R.C. 149.311(I), (J), and (K).

[21] R.C. 9.66.

[22] R.C. 718.13 and 718.84.

the TIF, which generally must use those service payments to pay for infrastructure improvements related to development of the TIF property.

The bill authorizes a county, township, or municipal corporation to extend the term of a project TIF exemption for up to 30 additional years, if certain conditions apply. Specifically:

- The buildings and structures on the parcels to which the TIF exemption applies must be owned by a multinational for-profit entity, i.e., an entity headquartered in Ohio that has business operations in both the United States and other countries;
- The entity must have already maintained a presence on the site for more than 25 years;
- The entity will commit to investing at least $100 million at the location over the period of the extended exemption;
- The entity will commit to retaining at least 1,000 jobs at the location over the period of the extended exemption;
- The parcels were the subject of a project TIF exemption that expired after tax year 2024.

Despite the requirement that the exemption have expired after tax year 2024, the extension may be authorized and commence in tax year 2025 or any year thereafter, regardless of when the bill is effective.

Mass transit for student transportation

Beginning July 1, 2026, the bill authorizes a city, local, or exempted village school district located in a county with a population between 530,000 and 540,000 according to the most recent federal decennial census with a local mass transit system (currently only Montgomery County) to arrange for student transportation services for the district's students in 9th through 12th grade via the mass transit system. Under current law, these school districts may arrange for student transportation services via mass transit system for eligible students who attend community schools or chartered nonpublic schools. However, there is no authorization for the school districts to transport the resident students enrolled in their own schools via mass transit.[23]

The bill requires any school district that arranges for the mass transit student transportation described above to ensure both of the following:

- The students are assigned to a route that does not require them to make more than one transfer; and
- That any transfer does not occur at the mass transit system's central transfer hub.

Current law has similar requirements associated with transfers when the students are being transported to and from community schools and chartered nonpublic schools.[24]

[23] R.C. 3327.017.

[24] R.C. 3327.017(D).

Surety liability for Brent Spence Bridge projects

The bill limits the liability of a surety on a contract performance bond to 115% of the value of the bond, with respect to any additional costs reasonably incurred by the Director of Transportation (ODOT Director) for completion of a project, if all the following apply:

- The contract relates to a major bridge project over the Ohio River (i.e., the Brent Spence Bridge project);
- The surety made a written offer to the ODOT Director within ten days of the contractor defaulting on the contract to complete the work covered by the contract; and
- The surety failed or refused to complete the work covered by the contract.[25]

Under current law, if a contractor defaults on a contract with the Department of Transportation (ODOT), the ODOT Director must provide written notice to the sureties on the contract performance bond. Those sureties then have the opportunity, within ten days of receiving the notice, to notify the ODOT Director in writing that they intend to complete the work covered by the contract. However, if those sureties also fail to complete the work and ODOT incurs additional costs as the result of that failure, those costs become the liability of the surety, collectable by the Ohio Attorney General.

For most contracts, the amount of the additional costs is not limited by the amount of the contract performance bond. Thus, a surety might be liable for amounts that exceed the original amount the surety guaranteed for the contract performance bond. For a major bridge project (like the Brent Spence Bridge project), the risks to the sureties on the contract performance bonds with no pre-established upper limits, make it harder to find sureties willing to take those risks. Thus, the bill creating a 115% cap on liability may help alleviate some of that risk.[26]

Department of Public Safety

Accessible parking placard

The bill removes the fee associated with obtaining a duplicate removable windshield placard when the original is lost, destroyed, or mutilated. Under current law, a person whose placard is lost, destroyed, or mutilated may obtain a duplicate placard to replace it. However, the person must pay the same amount the person paid originally to obtain the placard. Typically, that amount is either $8 or $15, unless the person qualifies for the veteran exemptions.

Additionally, the bill removes a couple of outdated references to "parking card." The parking card was the predecessor to the removable windshield placard and has not been issued since 1994.[27]

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[25] R.C. 5525.17(A)(4).

[26] R.C. 5525.17.

[27] R.C. 4503.44(J).

Commercial driver's licenses for noncitizens

The bill requires a commercial driver's license (CDL) that is issued to a legally present noncitizen of the U.S. to include a prominent statement with the words "Non-Domiciled Commercial Driver's License" printed on the CDL. Currently, a CDL issued to a noncitizen resident must only include a notation designating that the licensee is a noncitizen.[28] However, federal law considers these CDLs to be "Non-Domiciled CDLs"; thus, best practice is to include those words as well for compliance with federal identification requirements.[29]

Driver's license fees for disabled veterans

The bill expands which disabled veterans are exempt from paying driver's license-related fees by exempting a veteran who has a service-connected disability that is *compensated* at 100% by the U.S. Veterans Administration in the same manner as if the veteran has a disability rating of 100%. A similar exemption for motor vehicle registration and service fees was enacted through H.B. 96 of this General Assembly.[30]

Under current law, a disabled veteran with a service-connected disability *rated* at 100% by the federal Veterans Administration is exempt from paying driver's license-related fees when that veteran obtains a temporary instruction permit (including any exam fees); a new, renewal, reprint, or duplicate driver's license or CDL; a motorcycle operator's endorsement; a motorized bicycle license (including any reprint or duplicate); and any of the document authentication fees associated with those licenses.[31]

Driver's education and supervised driving requirements

Background

Beginning June 30, 2025, most adult limited term license applicants, when applying for the first issuance of that driver's license, must demonstrate that they have completed the full driver training course (24 hours of classroom instruction and eight hours of behind-the-wheel training) and 50 hours of practice driving with an adult who holds a valid Ohio driver's license.[32] A limited term license is the form of driver's license that is issued to temporary residents. A temporary resident is generally a person who is not a U.S. citizen or permanent resident under U.S. immigration laws but who has legal presence in the country.[33] These driver's education requirements for limited term license applicants were enacted through H.B. 54 of this General Assembly.

[28] R.C. 4506.11(A)(13).

[29] 49 C.F.R. 383.23.

[30] R.C. 4503.41.

[31] R.C. 4507.23(F) and (I).

[32] R.C. 4507.21(B)(3).

[33] Ohio Administrative Code 4501:1-1-21 and 4501:1-1-35.

Similarly, beginning September 30, 2025, any person under 21 must complete the full driver training course and 50 hours of practice driving with an eligible adult before obtaining an initial driver's license. Prior to that date, those requirements only applied to minors.[34] The expanded age for the full driver's education requirements were enacted through H.B. 96 of this General Assembly.

Exemptions for limited term license applicants

The bill creates an exemption from the driver's education and supervised driving requirements, described above, for a person who meets all of the following conditions:

- The person possesses a valid, unexpired visa issued by the U.S. Department of State;
- The person possesses a valid, unexpired foreign driver's license; and
- The person presents a completed form, as prescribed by the Registrar of Motor Vehicles, attesting to the person's relationship with a hospital or hospital system.[35]

Similarly, the bill also creates a driver's education and supervised driving exemption for a person who possesses a valid, unexpired H-2A visa (temporary agricultural worker) and who presents a form, prescribed by the Registrar, attesting to the person's employment on an Ohio farm that is signed by that employer.[36] These exemptions are similar to one recently enacted through H.B. 434 of this General Assembly for limited term license applicants who have a relationship with the U.S. Military, the U.S. Department of Defense, or any of the Department of Defense's subordinate agencies.[37]

Under current law, there are several other exemptions from the limited term license driver's education requirements. Namely, the following individuals are also exempt:

1. A person who otherwise receives a driver's license examination waiver by the Registrar because the person is active-duty military, serving in the Peace Corps, serving with Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), or in the foreign service of the U.S.; and
2. A person who is from a country with which the Registrar has a reciprocal arrangement (e.g., Japan, South Korea, Germany, Taiwan, and France).[38]

Eligible adult for supervised driving: emancipated young adult

The bill expands who qualifies as an "eligible" adult both for driving with an emancipated young adult who has a temporary instruction permit and for signing the affidavit that attests that the emancipated young adult has acquired 50 hours of practice driving.[39] An emancipated young

[34] R.C. 4507.21(B)(1) and (2).

[35] R.C. 4507.21(B)(4).

[36] R.C. 4507.21(B)(4).

[37] See information about H.B. 434 on the General Assembly's website at: legislature.ohio.gov.

[38] R.C. 4507.21(B)(4)(a) and (b).

[39] R.C. 4507.05 and 4507.21.

adult is a person between the ages of 18 and 21 who was in the temporary or permanent custody of a public children services agency, a planned permanent living arrangement, or in the Title IV-E-eligible care and placement responsibility of a juvenile court or other government agency that provides such services and whose custody, arrangement, or care and placement was terminated when the person turned 18.[40]

Under current law, an eligible adult for purposes of supervising practice driving and signing the accompanying affidavit is either a parent, guardian, or custodian of the temporary instruction permit holder or a person who is over 21 and who acts "in loco parentis" of that permit holder (and maintains proof of financial responsibility with respect to the permit holder's operation of a motor vehicle).[41] For emancipated young adults, practically, it is challenging to find a qualifying "eligible adult" in order to complete the hours of supervised driving if that person is limited to a parent, guardian, custodian, or person acting in loco parentis.

Attorney unclaimed funds

The bill exempts attorney unclaimed funds that are reported to the Director of Commerce on or before January 1, 2016, from escheating to the state on January 26, 2026, as required under current law. Instead, the bill provides that such funds are to remain in the custody of, or eligible for claim by, the Director of the Ohio Access to Justice Foundation until January 1, 2036, at which point all the rights to such funds shall vest solely in the Foundation.

The bill specifies that attorney unclaimed funds that are reported after January 1, 2016, shall escheat to the state as required under current law. The bill permits the General Assembly to appropriate funds to the Ohio Access to Justice Foundation each biennium to offset attorney unclaimed funds that escheat to the state, including the funds reported to the Director of Commerce after January 1, 2016.

The bill also makes an appropriation to the Ohio Access to Justice Foundation of $19,500 in FY 2026 and $90,500 in FY 2027 and also transfers $110,000 from GRF to the newly created Access to Justice Unclaimed Funds Fund.[42]

Private insurance outreach program

The bill repeals a provision enacted in H.B. 96 of the 136th General Assembly that requires the Ohio Department of Medicaid, during FY 2027, to create and administer an outreach program to provide information, awareness, and assistance to Medicaid recipients to help them transition from Medicaid to private insurance.[43] Continuing law also enacted in H.B. 96 requires the Ohio Department of Insurance to create and administer this program.[44]

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[40] R.C. 5180.42(A)(3).

[41] R.C. 4507.05(H)(1) and 4507.21(I).

[42] R.C. 169.081; Section 14.

[43] Section 751.80 of H.B. 96 of the 136th General Assembly, repealed.

[44] Section 739.20 of H.B. 96 of the 136th General Assembly, not in the bill.

Rural Practice Incentive Program

The bill updates the time admitted to the practice of law in Ohio from less than eight years to less than 12 years for the application to participate in the Rural Practice Incentive Program. In effect, that makes the application's requirements match the program's eligibility requirements.

Under continuing law, the Chancellor may repay up to $50,000 of an educational loan taken by an attorney in exchange for the attorney's employment as a service attorney in an underserved community.[45]

Publicly funded child care payments

The bill extends to July 9, 2028 (from July 5, 2026), the date by which the Department of Children and Youth must begin to calculate publicly funded child care payments based on a child's enrollment with a participating child care provider, rather than attendance.[46]

Prior to the enactment of H.B. 96, the 136th General Assembly's main operating budget, PFCC providers were *reimbursed* for a child's attendance. Consistent with a federal rule that took effect in April 2024,[47] the act requires *payments* to PFCC providers to be made prospectively rather than retroactively.[48] However, the act delayed until July 5, 2026, the requirement that payments be based on enrollment.

Early Childhood Education Grant Program

The bill prohibits a grant awarded under the Department of Children and Youth's Early Childhood Education Grant Program from being considered publicly funded child care (PFCC) or a family services program, thereby preventing a program grant from being subject to the laws governing PFCC or family services programs.[49] Under continuing law, family services programs include various programs funded in part with Temporary Assistance for Needy Families block grant funds, programs that provide child care assistance, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, the Residential State Supplement program, the State Adoption Maintenance Subsidy program, the Kinship Guardian Assistance Program, foster care, adoption assistance Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program, and certain Title XX social services.

H.B. 96, the 136th General Assembly's main operating budget, codified the Early Childhood Education Grant Program and established it in the Department of Children and Youth, with the aim of supporting and investing in Ohio's early learning and development programs. Subject to available funds, grants are to be awarded to programs meeting the act's eligibility conditions and in amounts that correspond to the number of eligible children served by the programs. Children receiving services from grantees also must satisfy eligibility conditions either

[45] R.C. 3333.133.

[46] R.C. 5104.32.

[47] 45 C.F.R. Part 98.

[48] R.C. 5104.30, 5104.32, 5104.34, and 5104.38.

[49] R.C. 5104.53 and 5101.35, not in the bill.

by having a family income not exceeding 200% of the federal poverty line or by having an individualized education program (IEP), being placed in foster or kinship care, or being homeless.

Ohio Post-Traumatic Stress Fund

The bill transfers responsibility for the Ohio Post-Traumatic Stress Fund from the OBM Director to the Director of Public Safety. The bill also specifies, for purposes of coverage under the fund, that all the following are included as a "public safety officer," whether they are paid or volunteer:

- A peace officer who has arrest powers under continuing law;
- A firefighter of a lawfully constituted fire department; and
- A first responder, emergency medical technician-basic, emergency medical technician-intermediate, or emergency medical technician-paramedic certified under the Emergency Medical Services Law.[50]

Under the bill, the OBM Director must transfer $40 million cash from the GRF to the fund in FY 2027.[51]

Under continuing law, the fund exists in the state treasury. Currently, the OBM Director is the fund's trustee. The fund is to be used for the following purposes:

- Paying compensation for lost wages to a public safety officer who is disabled by post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) without an accompanying physical injury received in the course of, and arising out of, employment as a public safety officer;
- Paying for medical, nurse, therapy, and hospital services and medicines required to treat the public safety officer's PTSD without an accompanying physical injury; and
- Paying administrative costs associated with providing the lost wage compensation and medical benefits described above.

Continuing law, however, prohibits payments from being made from it and specifies no person is eligible to file a claim against it.[52]

Other appropriations

The bill makes the following appropriations or changes to appropriations:

[50] R.C.5502.75, renumbered from R.C. 126.65.

[51] Section 3.

[52] R.C. 5502.75, renumbered from R.C. 126.65.

H.B. 184 – other appropriations[53]		
Agency	**Amount**	**Purpose**
Department of Administrative Services	$1.6 million	Building improvement
Department of Commerce – State Fire Marshal	No change	Small County Volunteer Fire Department Grants – clarifies eligibility
Department of Behavioral Health	$250,000	Eliminates earmark for Ashtabula County Transitional Housing for Homeless Youth under Department of Behavioral Health.
Department of Rehabilitation and Correction	$250,000	Appropriates $250,000 for Ashtabula County Public Safety Center security upgrades
Department of Natural Resources	No change	Corrects the name of a funding source to the Wildlife Land Royalty Fund
Department of Natural Resources	$85,000 earmark	Redirects a $85,000 earmark from Irishtown Bend and Canal Basin Park to Hart Crane Park
Office of Budget and Management	$175,000 earmark	Modifies an existing earmark for the Camp Cheerful Reimagined Project by instead allocating $100,000 for the Achievement Centers for Children Westlake facility and $75,000 for the Achievement Centers for Children Camp Cheerful facility
Attorney General	No change	Clarifies the use of the General Holding Account by stating it may be used to disburse money under the terms of grant agreements pertaining to body armor

[53] Sections 7 and 9.

HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	03-18-25
Reported, H. Workforce and Higher Education	05-14-25
Passed House (90-0)	05-14-25
Reported, S. Judiciary	10-29-25
Re-referred, S. Finance	11-18-25
Re-reported, S. Finance	---

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