



# Ohio Legislative Service Commission

## Bill Analysis

Chenwei Zhang

### H.B. 525

131st General Assembly  
(As Introduced)

**Reps.** G. Johnson, Boccieri, Boggs, Bishoff, Fedor, Howse, Leland, Lepore-Hagan, Phillips, Ramos

---

## BILL SUMMARY

- Requires business service users that provide residential and business facilities, own or control a multi-line telephone system (MLTS), and provide outbound dialing capacity, to configure the system so that users may directly access 9-1-1 without dialing any additional digit or code.
- Requires the MLTS to be configured to notify a centralized on-site location of any 9-1-1 call made through the system.
- Allows the Statewide Emergency Services Internet Protocol Steering Committee (SESIPSC) to grant a one-year waiver of the requirements under the following circumstances:
  - The requirements would be unduly and unreasonably burdensome;
  - The business service user provides an affidavit that identifies the MLTS, indicates that the user made a good faith attempt to reprogram or replace the system, and indicates that the user agrees to provide an instructional sticker for dialing 9-1-1.
- Requires a business service user that is granted a waiver to place an instructional sticker right next to each phone indicating the phone's inability to directly dial 9-1-1, and provides instructions for accessing 9-1-1.
- Provides that the SESIPSC may request the Attorney General to bring an action against any business that fails to comply with the bill's requirements and does not have a waiver.

- Specifies recovery amounts for noncompliance as follows:
  - \$1,000 for an initial failure;
  - Up to \$5,000 for each subsequent failure for every six months in which the business remains noncompliant.
- Specifies that the requirements of the bill do not apply to the extent that they are preempted by, or in conflict with, federal law.

---

## CONTENT AND OPERATION

### Direct 9-1-1 dialing capability

The bill requires a business service user that (1) provides residential or business facilities, (2) owns or controls a multi-line telephone system (MLTS) in those facilities, and (3) provides outbound dialing capacity, to ensure that the system is configured so that an individual can connect to 9-1-1 without any additional codes or digits. The system must also provide notification of any 9-1-1 call to a centralized location within the facility. The business service user is not required to have someone available to receive a notification. These requirements must be met not later than one year after the bill's effective date.<sup>1</sup>

A "business service user" is a user of business service that provides telecommunications service, including 9-1-1 service, to end users through a publicly or privately owned or controlled telephone switch.<sup>2</sup> A "multi-line telephone system" is defined as a system that (1) consists of common control units, telephone sets, control hardware and software, and adjunct systems, including network and premises-based systems, and (2) is designed to aggregate more than one incoming voice communication channel for use by more than one telephone.<sup>3</sup> The bill appears to cover phone systems such as those provided by hotels.

---

<sup>1</sup> R.C. 128.71.

<sup>2</sup> R.C. 128.70(B).

<sup>3</sup> R.C. 128.70(A).

## **Waivers**

### **Applying for a waiver**

The Statewide Emergency Services Internet Protocol Steering Committee (SESIPSC) must grant a one-year waiver from the requirements of the bill if the business service user satisfies all of the following:

- (1) The bill's requirements would be unduly and unreasonably burdensome;
- (2) The business service user provides an affidavit that asserts the following:
  - (a) The manufacturer and model number of the MLTS or equivalent system that would need to be updated or replaced;
  - (b) That the business service user made a good faith attempt to reprogram or replace the system;
  - (c) That the business service user agrees to place an instructional sticker next to the telephone in compliance with the bill's requirements.<sup>4</sup>

### **Sticker requirements upon being granted a waiver**

A business service user granted a waiver must meet the following requirements regarding the instructional sticker:

- (1) It is placed immediately next to each telephone that does not meet the bill's requirements;
- (2) It indicates that the phone is unable to directly dial 9-1-1 during the waiver period;
- (3) It provides instructions for accessing 9-1-1;
- (4) It is printed in at least 16-point boldface type in a contrasting color using an easily readable font.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> R.C. 128.72.

<sup>5</sup> R.C. 128.73.

## Penalties

The bill provides that, if a business service user fails to comply with the bill's requirements without being granted a waiver, the SESIPSC must request the Attorney General to bring a judicial action to recover penalties. These penalties are as follows:

--\$1,000 for an initial failure;

--Up to \$5,000 for each additional failure within each continuous six-month period in which the entity remains noncompliant.

These recovered funds must be deposited into the existing law 9-1-1 Program Fund.<sup>6</sup>

## Preemption

The bill provides that if any of its provisions are preempted by, or in conflict with federal law, those provisions do not apply.<sup>7</sup>

## Background

This bill relates to proposed legislation commonly known as "Kari's Law." Kari's Law seeks to remedy a situation that stemmed from the news story of Kari Hunt, a woman who was killed by her estranged husband in 2013 at a hotel in Texas. Hunt's daughter tried to dial 9-1-1 from the hotel room but was unable to connect because she did not realize that the hotel required the user to dial "9" to access an outside line. Kari's Law would require direct 9-1-1 access in such situations. Texas, Maryland, Illinois, and Tennessee, as well as the U.S. House of Representatives, have passed similar legislation.<sup>8</sup>

---

## HISTORY

### ACTION

### DATE

Introduced  
H0525-I-131.docx/ks

04-19-16

---

<sup>6</sup> R.C. 128.74.

<sup>7</sup> R.C. 128.75.

<sup>8</sup> H.R. 4167 – Kari's Law Act of 2016, U.S. Congress, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/4167/actions> (last visited Aug. 22, 2016); "Kari's Law to Improve 911 Access from Tennessee Hotels & Office Buildings," Tennessee Department of Commerce & Insurance, June 27, 2016, <https://tn.gov/commerce/news/43354> (last visited Aug. 22, 2016).

