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OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

Office of Research
and Drafting

Legislative Budget
Office

H.B. 144
135th General Assembly

Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

[Click here for H.B. 144's Bill Analysis](#)

Version: As Introduced

Primary Sponsor: Rep. Manchester

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: No

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Highlights

- The bill expands the conditions under which an August special election may be held to include a statewide vote on a proposed constitutional amendment if authorized by a joint resolution of the General Assembly. If so, the state would be responsible for covering the cost of such a special election.
- The bill appropriates \$20.0 million in FY 2023 under BOE Reimbursement and Education Fund (Fund 5FG0) appropriation line item 050620, BOE Reimbursement and Education, to compensate county boards of elections for the costs they incur for conducting the August 8, 2023 special election. Any remaining amounts at the end of FY 2023 are reappropriated for use in FY 2024.
- The appropriation is supported by a cash transfer of \$20.0 million from the GRF to Fund 5FG0.

Detailed Analysis

The bill expands the circumstances under which an August special election may be held. Current law limits this ability only to political subdivisions in fiscal emergency. It does so by allowing the General Assembly to place a proposed constitutional amendment on the ballot at an August special election if authorized by adoption of a joint resolution. Under current law, when there is a special election solely for the purpose of submitting to the voters a statewide ballot issue, the state is required to bear the entire cost and must reimburse counties for all expenses that boards of elections incur for running those elections.

The bill provides funding under the budget of the Secretary of State to compensate county boards of elections for the costs they will incur for running a special election on August 8, 2023. Specifically, the bill appropriates \$20.0 million in FY 2023 under Fund 5FG0 appropriation line

item 050620, BOE Reimbursement and Education, for this purpose. It reappropriates the unexpended, unencumbered portion of this appropriation at the end of FY 2023 for the same use in FY 2024. The funding is supported by a \$20.0 million cash transfer from the GRF to Fund 5FG0. Under the bill, the funding must be used by December 31, 2023. Otherwise, the Director of Budget and Management must transfer the unused cash from Fund 5FG0 back to the GRF.

The costs that boards of elections incur for holding elections fluctuate depending on the number of voting precincts involved. Overall, the per-precinct costs of conducting an election varies depending upon the precinct location and number of voters in that precinct. Typically, these costs vary from between \$800 to \$1,000 per precinct in rural precincts to approximately \$1,600 to \$2,000 for urban precincts.