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OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

Office of Research
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Legislative Budget
Office

S.B. 227
134th General Assembly

Bill Analysis

Version: As Introduced

Primary Sponsor: Sen. Williams

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SUMMARY

- Establishes the Public Assistance Benefits Cliff Study Committee.
- Requires the Committee to submit a report to the Governor and the General Assembly within one year, at which point the Committee will dissolve.

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Public Assistance Benefits Cliff Study Committee

The bill establishes a committee to study public assistance benefits cliffs in Ohio. A “benefits cliff” is a sudden decrease in public benefits that can occur due to a small increase in earnings.¹ For example, a recipient of publicly funded child care may encounter a benefits cliff if that recipient’s income slightly exceeds income eligibility, causing a loss in child care benefits of a value that exceeds the additional income earned.

The Committee is responsible for studying, taking testimony regarding, and discussing the issue of benefits cliffs in connection with public benefits. Public benefits include programs such as Medicaid, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), programs funded by the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant, the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), affordable housing programs, publicly funded child care, and any other public assistance programs with income-based eligibility.²

¹ Section 1(A).

² Section 1(F).

Membership and meetings

The Public Assistance Benefits Cliff Study Committee is composed of the following seven members:³

- Two members of the Senate, one from the majority party appointed by the President of the Senate, and one from the minority party appointed by the Minority Leader;
- Two members of the House of Representatives, one from the majority party appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and one from the minority party appointed by the Minority Leader; and
- Three members from nonpartisan community organizations focused on health, social, and economic issues appointed by the Governor.

All appointments must be made within thirty days of the bill's effective date.⁴

The President of the Senate is responsible for selecting one member of the Senate as co-chairperson, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives is responsible for selecting one member of the House as the other co-chairperson.⁵

The first Committee meeting must take place within sixty days of the bill's effective date. Additional meetings will be scheduled at the discretion of the co-chairpersons.⁶

Report

The Public Assistance Benefits Cliffs Study Committee is responsible for submitting an informational report to the Governor and the General Assembly within one year. The report must detail the Committee's findings and provide a summary of the testimony provided to the Committee. It also must include recommendations for legislative and administrative approaches to eliminate benefits cliffs, with references to the information that informed the recommendations. The Committee will dissolve after the report is submitted.⁷

HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	09-14-21

S0227-I-134/ts

³ Section 1(B).

⁴ Section 1(D).

⁵ Section 1(C).

⁶ Section 1(E).

⁷ Section 1(G) and (H).