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H.B. 442
134th General Assembly

Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

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Version: As Reported by House State and Local Government

Primary Sponsors: Reps. Stephens and Ray

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: No

Ryan Sherrock, Economist

Highlights

- The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) could realize an increase in training costs for specified staff employed with private agencies. Total costs would depend on a number of factors.

Detailed Analysis

The bill expands the individuals who may perform the duties of an adoption and foster care home assessor to include (1) individuals who hold a bachelor's degree in certain human services fields with at least one year of experience working with families and children, (2) current public children services agency (PCSA) caseworkers or PCSA caseworker supervisors, or (3) former employees of a PCSA who conducted the duties of a PCSA caseworker or PCSA caseworker supervisor (current law only specifies that the former PCSA employee, while employed, conducted the duties of an assessor). The bill also requires professional treatment staff (not subject to licensing requirements for counselors, social workers, and marriage and family therapists) employed by PCSAs, private child placing agencies, and private noncustodial agencies to meet the same educational qualifications and in-service training requirements as required of PCSA caseworkers in existing law. Under the bill, "professional treatment staff" is defined as a specialized foster home program agency employee or contractor with specified responsibilities. The bill's provisions could increase the number of individuals eligible to perform these duties. In addition, the provision requiring professional treatment staff to have the same training as PCSA caseworkers could result in an increase in training costs for the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS). PCSA caseworkers currently receive training through the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program (OCWTP). The OCWTP is a training system established under ODJFS for

public agency staff and managers, as well as resource families.¹ ODJFS's costs relating to the bill would depend on a number of factors, including whether: (1) the OCWTP system could be modified to include professional treatment staff at private agencies and if fees were charged to private agencies for this training, or (2) ODJFS established similar training for private agency staff.

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¹ R.C. sections 5103.32 and 5101.141 outline funding for the OCWTP. Funding currently comes from a variety of federal funds, available state funds, and funds that a person or foundation makes available for the program. In addition, ODJFS can withhold up to 3% of federal financial participation received for certain PCSA expenditures to help fund the program.