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OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

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Office

H.B. 405
134th General Assembly

Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

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Version: As Reported by Senate Local Government and Elections

Primary Sponsors: Reps. Stewart and Johnson

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: No

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Highlights

- The bill allows up to three members of a board of trustees of a county hospital to reside outside the county (rather than two under current law) when the size of the board is eight or ten. It is possible that travel reimbursements may minimally increase if a third member lives outside the county.
- The bill allows county treasurers to adopt policies allowing the electronic delivery of property tax and manufactured home tax bills to those who request to receive them by email or at a telephone number capable of receiving the bills. This could result in cost savings for county treasurers of an undetermined amount.
- The bill allows the county coroner's offices to access law enforcement information contained in the Ohio Law Enforcement Gateway (OHLEG), which is managed by the Attorney General's Bureau of Criminal Investigation. The Attorney General may experience additional costs to authorize these additional OHLEG users and grant specific permissions, but these costs are likely to be negligible. County coroner's offices that opt to utilize OHLEG may experience negligible administrative costs in training personnel to use the system.

Detailed Analysis

County hospitals

The bill clarifies the nature of the appointing authority for boards of county hospital trustees. Current law requires the board of county commissioners "together with" the longest

serving probate judge and the longest serving judge of the court of common pleas (other than the probate judge) to appoint the board of county hospital trustees. It is unclear whether this means: (1) the board of county commissioners must cast one vote as a body, thereby totaling three votes or (2) each of the three county commissioners must cast an individual vote, thereby totaling five votes. The bill clarifies it is the latter by specifying the appointing authority is comprised of five votes: one from each of the two judges and one from each of the three county commissioners. This should have no direct fiscal impact.

The bill also allows up to three members of a board of trustees of a county hospital to reside outside the county when the size of the board is eight or ten. Under current law, not more than two members may be electors of the area served by the hospital that is outside the county in which the hospital is located. Current law specifies that members of a board of county hospital trustees must be allowed their necessary and reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. Thus, it is possible that members may receive reimbursement for travel. Travel reimbursement expenses could minimally increase if a county hospital board of trustees includes a third member under the bill who resides outside the county and also has a longer travel time for official business compared to members who reside in the county. Allowable expenses are paid out of the funds provided for the county hospital.

Electronic delivery of property tax bills

The bill allows county treasurers to adopt policies allowing the electronic delivery of property tax and manufactured home tax bills to those who request to receive them by email or at a telephone number capable of receiving the bills. It allows county treasurers to rescind such a policy upon 30 days' written notice to those who have requested electronic delivery. It prohibits a county treasurer from imposing a fee or charge to receive a tax bill by mail against a person that does not make an electronic delivery request. It provides that email addresses and telephone numbers provided with requests for electronic delivery are not public records. These provisions will likely result in cost savings for county treasurers, of an undetermined amount.

County office vacancies

The bill provides a procedure by which a board of county commissioners can make an initial temporary appointment to fill a vacancy of a county elected office, as well as then make an appointment within 45 days to fill the position until the next election, when those vacant offices were held by individuals with no political party affiliation. As a practical effect, the bill provides the same appointment process for offices held by independent candidates as those with a political affiliation. There appears to be no direct fiscal effect to this provision, and that this procedure would need to be invoked very rarely.

Coroner access to OHLEG

The bill allows the county coroner's offices to access law enforcement information contained in the Ohio Law Enforcement Gateway (OHLEG), which is managed by the Attorney General's Bureau of Criminal Investigation. These offices will have access to view, but not alter, information contained in OHLEG. The Attorney General may experience additional costs to

authorize these additional OHLEG users and grant specific permissions, but these costs are likely to be negligible. County coroner's offices that opt to utilize OHLEG may experience negligible administrative costs in training personnel to use the system.¹

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¹ OHLEG is an electronic information network that allows Ohio law enforcement agencies to share criminal justice data in a secure manner.