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## Bill Analysis

**Version:** As Introduced

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Schmidt and A. Miller

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### SUMMARY

- Abolishes the death penalty in Ohio.
- Requires, generally, a person who is convicted of or pleads guilty to aggravated murder to be sentenced to one of three options:
  - Life imprisonment with parole eligibility after serving 20 full years of imprisonment;
  - Life imprisonment with parole eligibility after serving 30 full years of imprisonment;
  - Life imprisonment without parole.
- Requires a person who is convicted of or pleads guilty to aggravated murder of a victim under age 13 and who also is convicted of or pleads guilty to a sexual motivation specification to be sentenced to an indefinite prison term of 30 years to life under the Sexually Violent Predator Sentencing Law.
- Requires a person who is convicted of or pleads guilty to aggravated murder and also is convicted of or pleads guilty to a sexual motivation specification and a sexually violent predator specification to be sentenced to life imprisonment without parole under the Sexually Violent Predator Sentencing Law.
- Requires a person who is convicted of or pleads guilty to terrorism when the most serious offense comprising the terrorism is aggravated murder to be sentenced to life imprisonment without parole.
- Specifies that nothing in the bill is intended to nullify or mitigate the sentence of an offender who was sentenced to death before the bill's effective date.
- Specifies that an offender whose sentence of death was set aside, nullified, or vacated pursuant to an existing provision but who was not resentenced under that provision as of the bill's effective date must be resentenced in accordance with that provision as it existed immediately before that effective date.

- Specifies that an offender sentenced to death before the bill’s effective date will have the same rights to appeal and to postconviction remedies as the offender had immediately before that effective date and that courts have the same powers and duties regarding offenders under those provisions as they had before that effective date.
- Requires all reports and payments relating to capital cases that were required to be made under the state’s Public Defender Law before the bill’s effective date to be made each calendar or fiscal year, as applicable, in accordance with the law as it existed immediately before that effective date.
- Specifies that the Capital Case Attorney Fee Council created under existing law but repealed by the bill will continue under the existing provisions in effect immediately before the bill’s effective date, until each case in which a defendant was sentenced to death before that effective date is finally resolved.
- Modifies the current statutory provisions regarding peremptory challenges of jurors to reflect the bill’s elimination of capital cases and conform to Supreme Court Rules.
- Modifies the provisions regarding records retention by a court of common pleas, and requires a court of common pleas that sentences a defendant to death before the bill’s effective date to preserve the records in the action.
- Specifies that attorneys appointed to represent indigent defendants in postconviction relief proceedings, when the defendant was sentenced to death before the bill’s effective date, must be certified under the Rules for Appointment of Counsel in Capital Cases in the same manner as certifications were required under rules and statutes immediately before that effective date.
- Clarifies that the provision that allows the Governor, in certain circumstances, to modify notification and publication requirements when an application for a pardon or commutation of sentence of a person sentenced to death has been made will apply only regarding a person sentenced to death before the bill’s effective date.
- Makes an appropriation.

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## DETAILED ANALYSIS

### Abolishment of the death penalty in Ohio

The bill abolishes the death penalty in Ohio.

#### New sentencing for aggravated murder and terrorism

##### Aggravated murder

Except as described in the next paragraph, the bill requires that a person who is convicted of or pleads guilty to aggravated murder (see “**Offenses of aggravated murder and terrorism**,” below, for elements of that offense) be sentenced to one of three options:<sup>1</sup>

1. Life imprisonment with parole eligibility after serving 20 full years of imprisonment;
2. Life imprisonment with parole eligibility after serving 30 full years of imprisonment;
3. Life imprisonment without parole.

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<sup>1</sup> R.C. 2929.02(A).

If a person is convicted of or pleads guilty to aggravated murder, the victim of the offense under age 13, and the offender also is convicted of or pleads guilty to a “sexual motivation specification” (a defined term) included in the document charging the offense, except as described in the next sentence, the court must impose an indefinite prison term of 30 years to life under the Sexually Violent Predator Sentencing Law. If a person is convicted of or pleads guilty to aggravated murder and also is convicted of or pleads guilty to a sexual motivation specification and a “sexually violent predator specification” (a defined term) included in the document charging the murder, the court must impose a term of life imprisonment without parole under the Sexually Violent Predator Sentencing Law.<sup>2</sup>

Currently, a sentence of death is a sentencing option in certain circumstances for a person who is convicted of or pleads guilty to aggravated murder (see “**Death penalty – current law,**” below).

### **Terrorism**

The bill requires that a person who is convicted of or pleads guilty to terrorism when the most serious act of terrorism is aggravated murder (see “**Offenses of aggravated murder and terrorism,**” below, for elements of that offense) be sentenced to life imprisonment without parole.<sup>3</sup>

Currently, a sentence of death is a sentencing option in certain circumstances for a person who is convicted of or pleads guilty to terrorism (see “**Death penalty – current law,**” below).

### **Treatment of offenders sentenced to death before the bill’s effective date**

#### **In general**

The bill states that nothing in its provisions is intended to nullify or mitigate the sentence of an offender who was sentenced to death before its effective date.<sup>4</sup>

#### **Resentencing of offenders whose sentences were previously set aside, nullified, or vacated**

Under the bill, an offender whose sentence of death has been set aside, nullified, or vacated pursuant to the statute that pertains to the setting aside, nullification, or vacation of a death sentence and resentencing of the offender,<sup>5</sup> as that statute existed immediately before the bill’s effective date, but who has not been resentenced under that statute as of the bill’s

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<sup>2</sup> R.C. 2929.02(C), cross-referenced at R.C. 2929.14(E)(5) and (6), 2941.148(A)(1)(e) and (f), 2971.03(B)(3)(c), 2971.07(A)(6) and (7), and 5120.61(A)(1)(e) and (f).

<sup>3</sup> R.C. 2909.24.

<sup>4</sup> Section 4(B).

<sup>5</sup> R.C. 2929.06, not in, but repealed by, the bill.

effective date must be resentenced in accordance with that statute as it existed immediately before the bill's effective date.<sup>6</sup>

### **Right to postconviction DNA testing**

An offender who was sentenced to death before the bill's effective date will have the same rights to appeal and to postconviction remedies (including DNA testing and having had a serious mental illness at the time of the offense) as the offender had under the provisions of R.C. Chapter 2953 as those provisions existed immediately before the bill's effective date or as those provisions subsequently may be amended, and courts have the same powers and duties with respect to those offenders under those provisions as courts had before the bill's effective date.<sup>7</sup>

### **Reimbursements for counties' costs of conducting defense in capital cases**

Under current law, the State Public Defender must reimburse costs and expenses of conducting the defense in capital cases to each county. The amount of reimbursement is based on the total amount appropriated for the particular fiscal year by the General Assembly for the reimbursement of county appointed counsel offices and systems. If the amount appropriated in a fiscal year is insufficient to pay the cost in the fiscal year of all county appointed counsel offices and systems, the amount of money paid in that fiscal year to each county for the fiscal year is reduced proportionately so that each county is paid an equal percentage of its cost in the fiscal year.<sup>8</sup>

The bill repeals the provisions that pertain to reimbursement in capital cases.<sup>9</sup> Under the bill, all reports and payments relating to capital cases that were required to be made under any provision of the state's Public Defender Law or R.C. 109.97 (see below) as those provisions existed immediately before the bill's effective date must be made each calendar or fiscal year, as applicable, in accordance with those provisions as they existed immediately before the bill's effective date, and the Capital Case Attorney Fee Counsel created under existing law but repealed by the bill<sup>10</sup> will continue under the provisions of the section that created the Counsel as it existed immediately before the bill's effective date, until each case in which a defendant was sentenced to death before the bill's effective date is finally resolved.<sup>11</sup> R.C. 109.97, repealed by the bill, requires the Attorney General to prepare an annual capital case status report that contains information about every individual sentenced to death for committing an aggravated murder.

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<sup>6</sup> Section 4(A).

<sup>7</sup> Section 4(B).

<sup>8</sup> R.C. 120.35, not in, but repealed by, the bill, and R.C. 120.34.

<sup>9</sup> R.C. 120.34 and repeal of R.C. 120.35.

<sup>10</sup> R.C. 120.33(D), repealed by the bill.

<sup>11</sup> R.C. 120.34 and Section 4(C).

## Death penalty – current law

Current Ohio law allows the death penalty only for the offense of aggravated murder when the offender also is convicted of one or more specifications of an aggravating circumstance and the court determines after applying a specified balancing test that the death penalty is appropriate, or for the offense of terrorism when the most serious offense comprising the terrorism is aggravated murder. When sentencing for terrorism, the same sentencing procedure is used as is used when sentencing for aggravated murder.

### Offenses of aggravated murder and terrorism

#### Aggravated murder

Current law, unchanged by the bill, prohibits many different types of conduct that are included within the offense of aggravated murder. Under that offense, current law prohibits the following acts:<sup>12</sup>

1. Purposely, and with prior calculation and design, causing the death of another or the unlawful termination of another's pregnancy;
2. Purposely causing the death of another or the unlawful termination of another's pregnancy while committing or attempting to commit, or while fleeing immediately after committing or attempting to commit, kidnapping, rape, aggravated arson, arson, aggravated robbery, robbery, aggravated burglary, burglary, trespass in a habitation when a person is present or likely to be present, terrorism, or escape;
3. Purposely causing the death of another if: the other person is under age 13 at the time of the commission of the offense; the offender is under detention as a result of having been found guilty of or having pleaded guilty to a felony or has broken that detention; or the other person is a law enforcement officer whom the offender knows or has reasonable cause to know is a law enforcement officer and either the victim, at the time of the commission of the offense, is engaged in the victim's duties, or it is the offender's specific purpose to kill a law enforcement officer;
4. Purposely causing the death of a first responder or military member whom the offender knows or has reasonable cause to know is a first responder or military member when it is the offender's specific purpose to kill a first responder or military member.

Whoever violates one of these prohibitions is guilty of aggravated murder and must be sentenced either to life imprisonment or, if the death penalty potentially is applicable, to death, as discussed below.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> R.C. 2903.01, not in the bill.

<sup>13</sup> R.C. 2903.01(G), not in the bill, and R.C. 2929.02(A).

## **Terrorism**

Current law, unchanged by the bill, prohibits a person from committing a “specified offense,” a defined term that includes aggravated murder, with purpose to intimidate or coerce a civilian population, to influence the policy of any government by intimidation or coercion, or to affect the conduct of any government by the specified offense. Whoever violates the prohibition is guilty of terrorism. The penalty for the offense varies, depending upon the most serious underlying specified offense. If the most serious underlying specified offense is aggravated murder, the offender must be sentenced to life imprisonment without parole or death, using the same procedures that apply with respect to an offender convicted of aggravated murder.<sup>14</sup>

### **Sentencing procedures for aggravated murder**

Currently, the only situation in which a person potentially might face a sentence of death is when the person is convicted of the offense of aggravated murder, or terrorism with an underlying charge being an aggravated murder, and one or more specifications of an “aggravating circumstance” (e.g., committed for hire, repeat offense, felony murder, law enforcement officer victim, under age 13 victim, etc.). If a person is convicted of the offense but no such specification, the court must sentence the person to life imprisonment without parole, life imprisonment with parole eligibility after serving 30 full years of imprisonment, life imprisonment with parole eligibility after serving 25 full years of imprisonment, life imprisonment with parole eligibility after serving 20 years of imprisonment, or a special type of life imprisonment under the Sexually Violent Predator Sentencing Law. If a person is convicted of both the offense and one or more such specifications, and did not raise the matter of age or raised that matter and was found to have been 18 or older at the time of the commission of the offense, the trial jury and trial judge or the three-judge panel that tried the case conducts a sentencing hearing to determine whether to sentence the person to death or one of the life sentences described above.

In determining whether to impose the death penalty, the trial jury and trial judge or the three-judge panel conducts at a hearing a “balancing test” of the aggravating circumstances the offender was convicted of committing and all “mitigating factors” in the case (e.g., victim induced offense, offender is youth, offender lacked significant prior criminal history, offender was not principal, etc.), and the offender may be sentenced to death only if the trial jury and trial judge or the three-judge panel determines that the former outweigh the latter in the case. If the trial jury and trial judge or the three-judge panel does not sentence the offender to death, it must sentence the offender to life imprisonment without parole, life imprisonment with parole eligibility after serving 30 full years of imprisonment, life imprisonment with parole eligibility after serving 25 full years of imprisonment, or a special type of sentence of life imprisonment under the Sexually Violent Predator Sentencing Law.

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<sup>14</sup> R.C. 2909.24.

When a sentence of death is imposed, the offender is entitled as a matter of right to an appeal. If the sentence of death is set aside, nullified, or vacated for any of a list of specified reasons (including that the balancing test was not properly applied, the statutory procedure has been found to be unconstitutional, or the offender is mentally retarded, etc.), the trial court must hold a resentencing hearing and sentence the offender to an available type of life imprisonment, under specified procedures. A defendant who asserts that he or she was under age 18 at the time of the alleged commission of the offense and is not found to have been at least age 18 at that time cannot be sentenced to death.

The bill repeals all of these provisions that pertain to the imposition of a sentence of death.<sup>15</sup>

## **Challenge of jurors**

### **Operation of the bill**

The bill modifies the current statutory provisions regarding peremptory challenges of jurors. Under the bill, the provisions specify that in criminal cases in which there is only one defendant, each party, in addition to the challenges for cause authorized by law, may peremptorily challenge: (1) three of the jurors in misdemeanor cases, (2) four of the jurors in felony cases other than cases that may subject the defendant to a sentence of life imprisonment, and (3) six of the jurors in cases that may subject the defendant to a sentence of life imprisonment. If there is more than one defendant, each defendant may peremptorily challenge the same number of jurors as if the defendant were the sole defendant. In any case in which there are multiple defendants, the prosecuting attorney may peremptorily challenge a number of jurors equal to the total number of peremptory challenges allowed to all defendants.<sup>16</sup>

### **Existing law**

Currently, the numbers of peremptory challenges authorized under the statutory provisions are: (1) three of the jurors in misdemeanor cases, (2) four of the jurors in felony cases other than capital cases, and (3) in capital cases, notwithstanding Criminal Rule 24, 12 of the jurors.<sup>17</sup>

Criminal Rule 24 authorizes a different number of peremptory challenges. It specifies that the number of peremptory challenges authorized under the Rule are: (1) three prospective jurors in misdemeanor cases, (2) four prospective jurors in felony cases other than capital cases, and (3) six prospective jurors in capital cases.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> R.C. 2929.02; R.C. 2929.021 to 2929.06, not in (but repealed by) the bill.

<sup>16</sup> R.C. 2945.21.

<sup>17</sup> R.C. 2945.21.

<sup>18</sup> Criminal Rule 24.



The statutory provisions and the provisions of the Criminal Rule are in conflict regarding the number of peremptory challenges allowed in capital cases. The Ohio Supreme Court has held that the right to peremptorily challenge jurors is a substantive right, but that the limitation specified in Criminal Rule 24 on the number of such challenges allowed is a procedural matter and that, as a result, under Ohio Constitution, Article IV, Section 5(B), the limitation in the Rule is a provision “governing practice and procedure” and that it controls over the conflicting number specified in the statute and the statute is of no force and effect.<sup>19</sup>

## **Recording of actions and records retention**

Current law, unchanged by the bill, requires that all civil and criminal actions in common pleas courts must be recorded, that the reporter must take accurate notes of or electronically record the oral testimony, and that the notes and electronic records must be filed in the office of the official reporter and carefully preserved for one of two specified periods of time.

The first specified period of time under current law requires that if the action is not a capital case, the notes and electronic records must be preserved for the period of time specified by the common pleas court, which period of time may not be longer than the period of time that the other records of the particular action are required to be kept. The bill modifies this provision to specify that if the action is not a case in which a sentence of life imprisonment has been imposed or a case in which, prior to the bill’s effective date, a sentence of death was imposed, the notes and electronic records must be preserved for the period of time specified by the common pleas court, which period of time may not be longer than the period of time that the other records of the particular action are required to be kept.

The second specified period of time under current law requires that if the action is a capital case, the notes and electronic records must be preserved for the longer of ten years or until the final disposition of the action and exhaustion of all appeals. The bill modifies this provision to specify that if the action is a case in which a sentence of life imprisonment has been imposed or a case in which, prior to the bill’s effective date, a sentence of death has been imposed, the notes and electronic records must be preserved for the longer of ten years or until the final disposition of the action and exhaustion of all appeals.<sup>20</sup>

The bill requires a court of common pleas that sentenced a defendant to death before the bill’s effective date to preserve the records of the action as required by the provisions described in the two preceding paragraphs as they exist immediately before the bill’s effective date.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> *State v. Greer* (1988), 39 Ohio St.3d 236.

<sup>20</sup> R.C. 2301.20.

<sup>21</sup> Section 4(D).

## **Representation of offenders sentenced to death before effective date**

### **Ohio Public Defender Commission rules**

Currently, the Ohio Public Defender Commission is required to adopt rules prescribing minimum qualifications of appointed counsel, with the rules having to prescribe special qualifications for counsel and co-counsel in capital cases. The bill modifies this requirement to specify that the special qualifications portion applies with respect to counsel and co-counsel appointed in capital cases in which the defendant was sentenced to death before the bill's effective date.<sup>22</sup>

### **Representation in postconviction relief proceedings**

In cases in which the defendant was sentenced to death before the bill's effective date, the bill requires attorneys appointed to represent defendants in postconviction relief proceedings to be certified under the Rules for Appointment of Counsel in Capital Cases in the same manner as those certifications were required under former Rule 20 of the Rules of Superintendence of the Courts of Ohio by R.C. 120.06, 120.14, 120.26, and 120.33 as those sections existed immediately before the bill's effective date.<sup>23</sup>

## **Notification of application for pardon or commutation of sentence**

Currently, when an application for a pardon or commutation of sentence of a person sentenced to death has been made, the Governor may modify the requirements of notification to the prosecutor, judge, and victim, and the requirements of publication, that otherwise would apply if there is not sufficient time for compliance with the requirements before the date fixed for the execution of sentence. The bill retains this provision, but consistent with the bill's other provisions, clarifies that it will apply only with respect to a person sentenced to death before the bill's effective date.<sup>24</sup>

## **Appropriation**

The bill appropriates \$10 million in FY 2024 in GRF line item 055441, Victims of Crime.

## **Repeals**

The bill repeals 25 sections of the Revised Code. The following table lists these sections, and a brief description of each.

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<sup>22</sup> R.C. 120.03.

<sup>23</sup> Section 5.

<sup>24</sup> R.C. 2967.12(D).

Repealed section	Brief description
R.C. 109.97	Requires the Attorney General to prepare an annual capital case status report that contains information about every individual sentenced to death for committing an aggravated murder.
R.C. 120.35	Requires the State Public Defender to reimburse 50% of all costs and expenses of conducting the defense in capital cases.
R.C. 2725.19	Specifies that a prisoner brought before a judge on a habeas corpus writ is confined for a capital offense, the judge may not remove, discharge, or grant bail for the prisoner.
R.C. 2929.021	Requires the clerk of court to file notice with the Supreme Court of any indictment that charges a defendant with aggravated murder and also contained one or more aggravating circumstances that could lead to a sentence of death.
R.C. 2929.022	Provides the option to a defendant charged with aggravated murder and one or more specifications of aggravating circumstances to have a panel of three judges or, if the defendant was tried by a jury, the trial judge, determine the existence of the aggravating circumstance of a prior conviction at the sentencing hearing.
R.C. 2929.023	Permits a person charged with aggravated murder and one or more specifications of an aggravating circumstance to raise the matter of the person's age at the time of the alleged commission of the offense and to present evidence at trial that the person was not 18 years of age or older at the time of the alleged commission of the offense.
R.C. 2929.024	Requires the court to order that payment of fees and expenses for necessary services for an indigent defendant charged with aggravated murder be made in the same manner that payment for appointed counsel is made for other indigent defendants by the public defender.
R.C. 2929.025	Provides a process for a person charged with aggravated murder and one or more specifications of aggravating circumstances to raise the issue of the person's serious mental illness, the diagnosis of which may result in a finding of ineligibility for a sentence of death.
R.C. 2929.03	Specifies sentences for offenders found guilty of aggravated murder, and prohibits imposition of the death penalty on an individual who raises the matter of age at trial and is found not to have been 18 at the time of the commission of the offense.
R.C. 2929.04	Lists the aggravating circumstances to be specified in the indictment and proved beyond a reasonable doubt before imposition of a sentence of death, and lists the mitigating factors that the panel of judges, trial judge, or jury must consider and weigh against the aggravating circumstances before imposing a sentence of death.

Repealed section	Brief description
R.C. 2929.05	Requires the Supreme Court to review upon appeal the sentence of death at the same time that it reviews the other issues in the case, and to review and independently weigh all of the facts and other evidence disclosed in the record in the case and consider the offense and the offender to determine whether the aggravating circumstances the offender was found guilty of committing outweigh the mitigating factors in the case, and whether the sentence of death is appropriate.
R.C. 2929.06	Describes procedures for resentencing hearings when a sentence of death is set aside, nullified, or vacated.
R.C. 2945.20	Provides that, when two or more persons are jointly indicted for a capital offense, except upon application and a judicial finding of good cause, they must be tried separately.
R.C. 2947.08	Requires at least 120 days between the date of imposition of a sentence of death and the resulting execution.
R.C. 2949.21	Requires a writ for the execution of the death penalty to be directed to the sheriff by the court issuing it, and requires the sheriff to privately convey the prisoner to the facility designated by the Director of Rehabilitation and Correction for the reception of the prisoner within 30 days.
R.C. 2949.22	Prescribes the method for executing a death sentence to be via lethal injection of a drug or combination of drugs of sufficient dosage to quickly and painlessly cause death.
R.C. 2949.221	Generally prohibits disclosure of any information or record that indicates an individual's involvement in making, supplying, or administering drugs or equipment used in executions by lethal injection, and creates a civil cause of action for unauthorized disclosure of such information.
R.C. 2949.222	Requires a court to seal records pertaining to execution by lethal injection, and describes a process for the Director of Rehabilitation and Correction to follow if confidential information relating to execution by lethal injection is subpoenaed or requested by a court.
R.C. 2949.24	Requires the warden or another person selected by the Director of Rehabilitation and Correction to proceed at the time and place named in the warrant to ensure that the death sentence of the prisoner under death sentence is executed, unless a suspension of execution was ordered by a court.
R.C. 2949.25	Lists the persons who may be present at the execution of a death sentence.
R.C. 2949.26	Prescribes the method for disposal of the body of an executed offender.

Repealed section	Brief description
R.C. 2949.27	Requires the court to again fix the time for execution if an offender escapes after sentence of death and is not retaken before the time fixed for the offender's execution.
R.C. 2949.28	Requires notice to be sent to the sentencing court if a convict sentenced to death later appears not to have the mental capacity to understand the nature of the death penalty and why it was imposed upon the convict (i.e. appears to be "insane"), and prescribes procedures for the court to follow when determining whether or not the convict is insane.
R.C. 2949.29	Requires the prosecuting attorney, the convict, and the convict's counsel to attend an inquiry commenced by a court to determine whether a convict is insane, and prescribes procedures for providing treatment to a convict found to be insane.
R.C. 2949.31	Provides for suspension of a sentence of death if a female convict is found to be pregnant, and requires the court to set a new date for execution after the female is no longer pregnant.
R.C. 2967.08	Permits the Governor to grant a reprieve for a definite time to a person under sentence of death, with or without notices or application.

## Cross-references and conforming changes

The bill eliminates cross-references to the death penalty and related provisions, and conforms cross-references to divisions in other sections that are re-designated, in the following sections of the Revised Code: R.C. 9.07, 120.041, 120.14, 120.18, 120.24, 120.28, 120.33, 149.43, 149.436, 1901.183, 2152.13, 2152.67, 2307.60, 2701.07, 2743.51, 2909.24, 2929.13, 2929.14, 2929.61, 2937.222, 2941.021, 2941.148, 2941.401, 2941.43, 2941.51, 2945.13, 2945.33, 2945.38, 2949.02, 2949.03, 2953.08, 2953.71, 2953.72, 2953.73, 2953.81, 2967.13, 2967.193, 2967.194, 2971.03, 2971.07, 5120.113, 5120.53, 5120.61, 5139.04, and 5919.16.

The bill amends several Revised Code sections to eliminate a process or procedure related to the death penalty that is contained in the particular section. The following table lists those sections and includes a brief description of that process or procedure.

Section	Brief description of process or procedure eliminated
R.C. 120.06(F)	Requires attorneys appointed by the office of the State Public Defender to represent a petitioner in a post-conviction relief proceeding involving a sentence of death to be certified under Rule 20 of the Rules of Superintendence of the Courts of Ohio to represent indigent defendants charged with or convicted of an offense for which the death penalty can be or has been imposed.

Section	Brief description of process or procedure eliminated
R.C. 120.16(G)	Requires attorneys appointed by the office of the county public defender to represent a petitioner in a post-conviction relief proceeding involving a sentence of death to be certified under Rule 20 of the Rules of Superintendence of the Courts of Ohio to represent indigent defendants charged with or convicted of an offense for which the death penalty can be or has been imposed.
R.C. 120.26(G)	Requires attorneys appointed by the office of the joint county public defender to represent a petitioner in a post-conviction relief proceeding involving a sentence of death to be certified under Rule 20 of the Rules of Superintendence of the Courts of Ohio to represent indigent defendants charged with or convicted of an offense for which the death penalty can be or has been imposed.
R.C. 120.33(C)	Requires attorneys appointed by a board of county commissioners in lieu of using a county public defender or joint county public defender to represent a petitioner in a post-conviction relief proceeding involving a sentence of death to be certified under Rule 20 of the Rules of Superintendence of the Courts of Ohio to represent indigent defendants charged with or convicted of an offense for which the death penalty can be or has been imposed.
R.C. 2317.02	Provides that communication between a client in a capital case and the client's attorney is not subject to testimonial privilege if the communication is relevant to a subsequent ineffective assistance of counsel claim by that client.
R.C. 2901.02(B)	Classifies aggravated murder when the indictment included at least one aggravating circumstance as a capital offense.
R.C. 2930.19(D)	Provides that when there is a conflict between a provision in the Victim's Rights Law and a specific statute governing the procedure in a capital case, the specific statute supersedes the Victim's Rights Law.
R.C. 2941.14(B) and (C)	Describes the process for the inclusion of specifications of aggravating circumstances in an indictment charging aggravated murder and states that the death penalty is precluded without such a specification.
R.C. 2941.51(E)	Requires the county auditor, in reporting expenses paid for indigent defendants, to separately state expenses that are reimbursable by the State Public Defender in capital cases.
R.C. 2945.06	Describes the procedure for trial by a court composed of three judges of an offender charged with an offense punishable with death who waives the right to a jury trial.
R.C. 2945.10	Requires the court, in a capital case that is being heard by a jury, to prepare written instructions on the points of law, provide copies before orally instructing the jury, and permit the jury to consult the instructions during deliberations.

Section	Brief description of process or procedure eliminated
R.C. 2945.25(C)	Describes the procedure for challenges for cause of potential jurors when trying capital cases.
R.C. 2953.02	Describes the right to an appeal of a death sentence.
R.C. 2953.07	Requires the appellate court when a death sentence is affirmed to appoint a day for execution and issue a warrant to the sheriff or warden to carry the sentence out.
R.C. 2953.09(A)(2)(b)	Specifies the circumstances under which a court of common pleas or court of appeals may suspend the execution of a sentence of death.
R.C. 2953.10	Specifies the authority of the Supreme Court to suspend the execution of a sentence of death during appeal.
R.C. 2953.21(A) to (K)	Describes the process for filing of petition for postconviction relief for offenders sentenced to death, specifies the Supreme Court's authority to stay the execution of a sentence of death, and provides for the appointment of counsel to file petitions for postconviction relief for offenders sentenced to death.
R.C. 2953.23	Describes the circumstances when a second or subsequent petition for postconviction relief for an offender sentenced to death will be considered, or when a petition for such an offender will be considered if filed after the deadline for filing such petitions.
R.C. 2967.05(C)	Specifies that an offender who is in imminent danger of death, medically incapacitated, or suffering from a terminal illness is ineligible for early release if sentenced to death.
R.C. 2967.12(D)	Authorizes the Governor to modify the requirements of notification to the prosecutor, judge, and victim that otherwise would apply when a person who has been sentenced to death has applied for a pardon or commutation of sentence.

## HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	09-12-23