OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

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Office of Research and Drafting

Legislative Budget Office

S.B. 225
136th General Assembly

Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

Click here for S.B. 225's Bill Analysis

Version: As Reported by Senate Judiciary

Primary Sponsor: Sen. Manchester

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: No

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Highlights

- The bill expands the pool of participants and volunteer application assistants for the Address Confidentiality Program managed by the Secretary of State (SOS), commonly referred to as the Safe at Home Program. These changes are anticipated to increase administrative costs to the Secretary of State.

Detailed Analysis

Address Confidentiality Program

The bill makes changes to the Address Confidentiality Program managed by the Secretary of State (SOS) and commonly referred to as the Safe at Home Program. Specifically, it expands the list of crimes that make a victim and the victim's household members eligible to participate in the Address Confidentiality Program to include (1) any crime that caused serious physical harm or death to the victim and (2) any crime in which the victim was threatened with a deadly weapon. Additionally, it expands the eligible pool of volunteers that may be trained by the SOS to be an application assistant.

Overall, these changes could increase costs for the Secretary of State. The total cost will depend on the number of newly eligible individuals who apply to participate in the Safe at Home Program. These costs are paid from the Address Confidentiality Fund (Fund 5SN0), which consists of court-imposed fines revenue of between $70 and $500 for specified felony and misdemeanor offenses and annual cash transfers of up to $400,000 per fiscal year from the Business Services Fund (Fund 5990). In FY 2025, the SOS spent almost $185,000 to operate the program. So far in FY 2026, as of May 20, 2026, the SOS has incurred expenses of approximately $240,000 to administer the program. As of May 20, 2026, the cash balance of the fund is just over $290,000.

Confidential addresses – election records

The bill also requires that, if a person who is the subject of a voter registration challenge or candidacy protest has a confidential address, the hearing be closed to the public and the person's address be redacted from any publicly available version of records of the challenge or protest. Presumably, there would be few such instances and the work involved with keeping the address information confidential would be minimal.

Public Records Law exemption – judges' and prosecutors' addresses

The bill exempts a judge's or prosecutor's residence address from disclosure under the Public Records Law. Any fiscal effects this change in the Public Records Law will have on public entities is likely to be small. On the one hand, these exemptions could lead to some small savings in administrative time for public entities when fulfilling public records requests and managing employment records of designated public service workers because the applicable information would not need to be collected and reported. On the other hand, allowing former public service workers to request that certain identifying information be redacted and protected from disclosure could cause some negligible increase in staff time for handling these requests. At any rate, there are likely to be few requests to redact this information, and any additional work would be handled by existing staff using available resources.

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