



OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

Nicholas J. Blaine

Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

Bill: H.B. 126 of the 132nd G.A.

Status: As Reported by House Finance

Sponsor: Reps. Boyd and Rezabek

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: No

Subject: Statewide region-based Kinship Care Navigator Program

State & Local Fiscal Highlights

- The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) will expend about \$6.5 million annually to operate the statewide Kinship Care Navigator Program required by the bill. The program will be funded with a \$5.0 million GRF appropriation in FY 2019 that may be used to match any available federal Title IV-E funds.
- Public children services agencies that currently operate navigator programs might realize a decrease in costs since ODJFS will be responsible for the cost of operating the statewide program.

Detailed Fiscal Analysis

The bill requires ODJFS to operate a statewide Kinship Care Navigator Program; under current law, it is permissive. The bill specifies that the program will be funded to the extent that GRF funds have been appropriated for this purpose and includes a \$5.0 million appropriation to GRF line item 600523, Family and Children Services, for the program. The bill specifies that this appropriation may be used to draw down eligible federal Title IV-E funds. In addition, the bill requires the ODJFS Director to take action to secure funds under Title IV-E of the Social Security Act. The bill requires the ODJFS Director to divide the state into five to 12 regions for the program. Each region will be responsible to provide kinship navigator services for kinship caregivers within its region. Kinship care navigators assist kinship caregivers in obtaining information, services, and benefits available at the state and local level.

ODJFS estimates it will cost \$6.5 million per year to operate the program. The estimated cost is based on a three-year Family Connections grant Ohio received from 2009-2012. Under this grant, kinship services similar to those required in the bill were provided in seven counties to about 5.5% of the state's total kinship placements at a cost of about \$300,000 per year. ODJFS estimates that scaling this program to the entire state would cost \$6.5 million annually.

The bill specifies that no county departments of job and family services or public children services agency will be responsible for the program's cost. As a result, public children services agencies that currently operate navigator programs may realize a decrease in costs. According to the Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO) however, there are few counties that operate such programs.