



OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

Jessica Murphy and other LSC staff

Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

Bill: H.B. 137 of the 132nd G.A.

Status: As Reported by Senate Government Oversight & Reform

Sponsor: Rep. Kent

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: No

Subject: Adds peace officers to mandatory reporters of child abuse and neglect

The bill adds peace officers to the list of mandatory reporters for child abuse and neglect. According to the Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police, it is standard practice for law enforcement officers to report incidences of child abuse and neglect to a public children services agency (PCSA) that are witnessed by the officer. Additionally, because officers are generally required to inform PCSAs of suspicions of abuse or neglect reported to them by another individual, officers will not require additional training to comply with the bill's reporting requirement. The Public Children Services Association of Ohio stated that any additional costs to PCSAs would depend on whether the bill substantially increases the number of reports received. Since peace officers largely report witnessed instances of child abuse and neglect, any increase in the number of reports and subsequent costs will likely be minimal.

Under current law, unchanged by the bill, a violation of the mandatory reporting requirement generally is a misdemeanor of the fourth degree.¹ As the bill largely codifies current practice in the law enforcement community relative to reporting child abuse and neglect, violations will be infrequent. Thus, there will be no discernible ongoing fiscal effects on counties and municipalities in terms of their costs to prosecute and sanction violators and the collection of related revenues (fines and court costs and fees).

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¹ The penalty for a fourth degree misdemeanor is a possible jail term of not more than 30 days, a fine of up to \$250, or both.