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# OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

Office of Research  
and Drafting

Legislative Budget  
Office

H.B. 496  
133<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly

## Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

[Click here for H.B. 496's Bill Analysis](#)

**Version:** As Passed by the House

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Stein and Hoops

**Local Impact Statement Procedure Required:** No

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### Highlights

- The bill may (1) prevent certain damage suits from being filed or expedite their termination, and (2) minimally reduce expenditures that a court might otherwise have incurred adjudicating civil cases involving apiary related damages.
- The bill has no direct fiscal effect on the state.

### Detailed Analysis

The bill grants immunity to a registered apiary owner in personal injury or property damage cases if the beekeeper complies with specified state and local laws and industry best management practices. Civil actions seeking such damages would generally fall under the subject matter jurisdiction of common pleas, municipal, and county courts.<sup>1</sup>

A local apiary expert confirmed there are currently very few civil suits involving apiaries. Disputes usually involve apiaries in more urban areas being too close to property lines, and many appear to be resolved without the involvement of the courts. For those few cases that may reach the courts under current law, because of the immunity created by the bill, it is possible that a case may not be filed, or if filed disposed of more quickly. Either outcome creates a savings effect, as it reduces the time and effort that a court might otherwise have expended on adjudicating certain civil cases.

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<sup>1</sup> The general division of a court of common pleas has original jurisdiction in all civil cases in which the amount in controversy is more than \$15,000. Municipal and county courts have civil jurisdiction that is limited to cases in which the amount of money in dispute does not exceed \$15,000.

As of February 2020, the Ohio Department of Agriculture reported that there were 9,160 registered apiaries operating in the state, with 45,209 colonies. Overall, there are more than 6,600 beekeepers in the state.