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H.B. 29
134th General Assembly

Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

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Version: As Reported by Senate Veterans & Public Safety

Primary Sponsors: Reps. Wiggam and A. Miller

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: No

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Highlights

- County recorders may experience a negligible annual increase in costs to record additional discharge records of individuals who qualify under the expanded definition of “uniformed services.”
- The bill could create additional minimal annual costs to a county if the board of county commissioners currently participates in the veterans’ identification card program or opts to in the future. Presumably, the costs would be offset to some degree by the fee (if charged) paid by the applicants.
- The bill would have no direct fiscal effect on the state.

Detailed Analysis

The bill broadens the authority of county recorders to record the discharge records of certain individuals. Under current law, this service is only available to discharged members of the “armed forces of the United States.”¹ The bill changes this eligibility designation to “uniformed services.” Under the bill, “uniformed services” includes not only members of the armed forces, but also the commissioned corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the commissioned corps of the Public Health Service, or any reserve components of those forces, and such other service as may be designated by Congress in the future.

¹ “Armed forces of the United States” means the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Space Force, Coast Guard, the national guard of any state, or any other reserve components of those forces.

This broadening language will also make these discharged individuals eligible to obtain an Ohio veterans identification card. Under continuing law, a board of county commissioners may, by resolution, allow the county recorder or county veterans service office to issue Ohio veterans identification cards to individuals. To be eligible to obtain this card, an individual must satisfy the following requirements: (1) present the individual's "uniformed services" discharge record for recording in the county recorder's office, (2) provide, in person at the county recorder's office, two forms of current valid identification, one of which bears a photograph of the individual, and (3) pay a fee not exceeding \$2, if a fee has been established by the county. The bill expands eligibility for this card to persons discharged from the "uniformed services."

The number of persons belonging to this new eligibility class is expected to be relatively small statewide. As such, the bill would not likely result in significant fiscal effects for counties to make and administer the card to these additional persons.

Because the bill is permissive and contains provisions that allow county recorders or county veterans service office to either contract for this service, or receive equipment donations to make the identification cards, it can be assumed that very few counties would opt to purchase the necessary equipment to make these cards if they have not already done so. Presumably, the costs would be offset to some degree by the fee charged to applicants, if a fee has been established. The exact cost for counties that are required by the board of commissioners to offer the card is dependent on the number of individuals that are both eligible and seek a veterans identification card.