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OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

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Office

H.B. 415
135th General Assembly

Bill Analysis

Version: As Introduced

Primary Sponsors: Reps. Jarrells and Santucci

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SUMMARY

- Creates the Ohio Sports Commission, consisting of an Executive Council and Advisory Committee, to enhance the quality of life in Ohio through the attraction, promotion, and development of national and international sports.
- Creates the Ohio Sports Commission Fund, to be used to support the Ohio Sports Commission and to provide grants to public and private entities that fulfill the stated purpose of enhancing the quality of life in Ohio through the attraction, promotion, and development of national and international sports.

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Ohio Sports Commission

The bill creates the Ohio Sports Commission with the stated purpose of enhancing the quality of life in Ohio through the attraction, promotion, and development of national and international sports. The Commission is within the Department of Development and has an Executive Council and an Advisory Board. The Commission's primary function is to partner and coordinate with convention and visitor bureaus, chambers of commerce, municipal corporations, sports organizations, venues, and appropriate stakeholders to attract and host major sporting events that enhance Ohio's economy and image.¹

Executive Council

The Ohio Sports Commission Executive Council, consisting of 15 members who serve without compensation, must study the promotion and development of sports tourism in Ohio. Within six months after the bill takes effect, the Council must issue a report to the Governor,

¹ R.C. 122.29 and 122.291(A)(2).

Senate President, and Speaker of the House. In perpetuity, the Council must develop policy recommendations for the General Assembly, the Governor, and local governments, but is not subject to an annual reporting requirement.²

The Department of Development must provide the Council with office space and meeting areas. The Council can appoint employees as necessary.³

Membership

The Council consists of the following 15 members:

- The Governor, or a designee;
- The Director of Development, or a designee;
- The Director of TourismOhio, or a designee;
- Four members of the General Assembly, who must be appointed within the first 30 days of a General Assembly and who serve only while still serving in the General Assembly:
 - One member of the majority party of the Senate appointed by the Senate President;
 - One member of the minority party of the Senate appointed by the Senate Minority Leader;
 - One member of the majority party of the House appointed by the Speaker of the House;
 - One member of the minority party of the House appointed by the House Minority Leader.
- Eight members appointed by the Governor, with four serving an initial term of two years (thereafter, four years) and four serving terms of four years:
 - One member of an organization in Ohio that represents student athletes;
 - One member of an organization in Ohio that represents professional athletes;
 - One member that represents convention and visitors' bureaus in Ohio;
 - One member that represents local sports commissions in the Cincinnati and southwestern Ohio area, recommended by one or more sports commissions fitting that description;
 - One member that represents local sports commissions in the Columbus and central Ohio area, recommended by one or more sports commissions fitting that description;

² R.C. 122.291(A)(1), (3), and (4).

³ R.C. 122.291(C), (D), and (E).

- One member that represents local sports commissions in the Cleveland and northeastern Ohio area, recommended by one or more sports commissions fitting that description;
- One member that represents local sports commissions in any area of Ohio not described above, recommended by one or more sports commissions fitting that description;
- One member that represents private stakeholders in the sports industry or tourism industries in Ohio.

Vacancies are filled in the same manner as the original appointment. The members serve without compensation and are reimbursed for the actual and necessary expenses incurred performing their official duties. The Council meets at the call of the chairperson, who must be elected at the first meeting and biannually thereafter. A majority of members constitutes a quorum, and at least eight members are necessary to take official action, including the appointment of Advisory Council members and the approval of grants. (see below).⁴

New grant program

The bill creates the Ohio Sports Commission Fund to be used by the Commission, including the Council, in performing its duties. In part, this includes the issuance of grants to public and private entities that fulfill the stated purpose of enhancing the quality of life in Ohio through the attraction, promotion, and development of national and international sports. The fund consists of money credited or transferred to it and grants, gifts, and contributions made directly to it. The bill does not include an appropriation.⁵

Existing Sports Event Grant Program

Under continuing law, the Department of Development provides grants to counties, municipalities, and local organizing committees that partner with site selection organizations for certain sport games.⁶ The bill requires the Council to assist counties, municipalities, and organizing committees in their negotiations and agreements with site selection organization, and with applying for grants under the existing program. The Council also then must assist the Department of Development with the evaluation and determination regarding grant applications.⁷

⁴ R.C. 122.291(E).

⁵ R.C. 122.293 and 122.291(A)(5).

⁶ R.C. 122.12, not in the bill. For more information about this existing grant program and the guidelines, visit the [Department of Development's program website](#), which is available on the Department's website via a keyword search: development.ohio.gov.

⁷ R.C. 122.121 and 122.291(A)(6) and (7).

Advisory Committee

The Ohio Sports Commission also has an Advisory Committee appointed by the Executive Council. The Advisory Committee will consist of nine or 11 members (to be determined by the Council) who represent public and private stakeholders in the sports tourism industry in Ohio; there must be at least one athlete representative. Vacancies are filled in the same manner as the original appointment. The members serve without compensation and are reimbursed for the actual and necessary expenses incurred performing their official duties. The Advisory Committee meets at the call of the chairperson, who must be elected at the first meeting and biannually thereafter. A majority of members constitutes a quorum, and a quorum is necessary to take official action. The Department of Development must provide the Advisory Committee with office space and meeting areas. The Advisory Committee has the following duties:

- Assist the Executive Council;
- Study the promotion and development of sports tourism in Ohio;
- Partner and communicate with private and public stakeholders to attract major sports events to Ohio;
- Develop policy recommendations for the Executive Council, and provide input regarding any plans developed or grants contemplated by the Executive Council;
- Provide assistance, upon request, to organizing committees, endorsing municipalities, or endorsing counties in negotiating and entering into joinder agreements with site selection organizations and formulating applications for Sports Event Grants;
- Attend meetings of the Executive Council, at the Executive Council's discretion.⁸

HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	02-15-24

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⁸ R.C. 122.291(A)(8).