



Ohio Legislative Service Commission

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Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

Bill: H.B. 46 of the 131st G.A.

Date: March 2, 2015

Status: As Introduced

Sponsor: Reps. Dovilla and Dever

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: No

Contents: To require the Treasurer of State to establish the Ohio State Government Expenditure Database

State Fiscal Highlights

- The required database has already been implemented on the Office of the Treasurer's website. The bill's requirement to implement the Ohio State Government Expenditure Database therefore represents codification of current practice of that Office. This provision may entail ongoing maintenance costs, but the bill specifies that the Office must fulfill the requirement using existing resources.
- The provision requiring all state agencies to place links to the database on their websites may minimally increase various state agencies' administrative costs. However, the bill specifies that state entities must comply with all of the requirements in the bill using their existing resources. Thus, any increase in costs related to the requirements under this bill would be paid out of state agencies' existing budgets.

Local Fiscal Highlights

- No direct fiscal effect on political subdivisions.

Detailed Fiscal Analysis

The bill requires the Treasurer of State (TOS) to establish and maintain an expenditure database, the Ohio State Government Expenditure Database. The Database must be available on the Treasurer's website and accessible to the public at no charge, and include certain information related to expenditures of state entities made in each fiscal year that commences after the effective date of this bill. The bill requires state entities to assist the Treasurer in the development, establishment, operation, storage, hosting, and support of the Database at no cost to the Treasurer. The bill specifies that state entities must comply with the bill's requirements using their existing resources.

The bill specifies that each state entity must display on its website a prominent Internet link to the Database. Each state entity, at least monthly and through the Ohio Administrative Knowledge System (OAKS),¹ must provide information to the Treasurer for inclusion in the Database regarding each of the entity's expenditures paid to a vendor for the preceding month. The bill also requires the Department of Administrative Services or the Department of Education, as applicable, to provide data related to state and school district employee salary and employment information to the Treasurer, in a format, manner, and time frame as determined by the Treasurer.

The bill requires the Treasurer to develop and publish on its website graphical representations of data contained in the Database, including charts and graphs, to enhance and organize the data. Not later than one year after the Database is implemented, the Treasurer must provide, on its website, an opportunity for public comment as to the utility of the Database. The bill requires the Treasurer to include database usage data in the Treasurer's annual report of transactions and proceedings and summary of official acts of the office. The bill also authorizes the Treasurer to adopt reasonable rules related to the bill requirements.

The bill prohibits the Database from including any information that is determined to be confidential or is not a public record under Ohio law. The bill also provides that the Treasurer and the Treasurer's employees are not liable for the disclosure of a database record that is determined to be confidential or is not a public record under Ohio law.

¹ OAKS is an enterprise resource planning software system integrating central government business functions, including human resources, procurement, budgeting, accounting, and asset management.

Fiscal effect

The bill simply codifies the requirement that the Treasurer of State must establish and maintain an expenditure database, the Ohio State Government Expenditure Database. In December 2014, the Treasurer of State's Office created "Ohio's Online Checkbook," that is posted on the Treasurer's website and accessible to the public at no charge.² Currently, the Checkbook includes information related to expenditures of state entities made in FY 2008 through FY 2014, but as of this writing it does not include salary information about state employees or school district employees. Thus, it appears to satisfy most, but not all, of the bill's provisions regarding the required database. The bill provisions require the database to be maintained on a monthly basis, which implies ongoing administrative costs. However, the bill specifies that the work must be paid out of existing budgetary resources.

The provision that requires each state entity to provide certain data to the Treasurer for inclusion in the Database may not have any fiscal effect on the entities' administrative costs since all the information related to state entities' expenditures is currently held in OAKS. The bill also requires state agencies to place links to the Database on their websites. The bill specifies that state entities must comply with all of the requirements in the bill using existing resources and no state entity is allowed to charge the Treasurer for any costs arising from complying with the requirements. Thus, any increase in such costs would be paid from each agency's existing budget. It may be possible for state agencies to comply with the bill's requirements at no additional cost, but LSC economists are unsure that the no-additional-cost requirement guarantees that. The bill does not specify what an agency should do if it cannot comply with the bill's provisions with existing resources.

The bill generally excludes local governments from the definition of state entity. As a result, it creates no direct fiscal impact on local governments.

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² The Ohio Treasurer of State website is located at www.ohiotreasurer.gov.