



H.B. 143

124th General Assembly

(As Reported by H. Local Government and Townships)

Reps. Young, Calvert, Flowers, Hartnett, Latell, Reinhard, Schaffer, Seitz, Coates, Carano, Sferra, Fessler, Widowfield, Schmidt, Hughes, White, Roman, Wolpert, Carmichael, Distel, Driehaus, Salerno, Setzer, Stapleton, Strahorn

BILL SUMMARY

- Specifies that state *statutory* law does not require a fire chief to be a resident of the political subdivision the chief serves.
- Removes the *statutory* directive that requires municipal fire chiefs to be electors of the municipal corporation they serve.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

The bill explicitly states, in a general provision of law, that the Revised Code does not require, and must not be construed to require, the fire chief of a "firefighting agency" (a political subdivision that operates a fire department) to reside in the territory of the firefighting agency (sec. 9.61). The bill then explicitly states, in relevant Revised Code sections, that the fire chief of a township, joint fire district, fire and ambulance district, or fire district is not required by state statute to be a *resident* of that political subdivision (secs. 505.371(E), 505.375(B), and 505.38(A) and (C)). The bill does not affect, however, the fire prevention officer of a township or a fire and ambulance district.

The bill also adds language in the Municipal Law's provisions dealing with city and village fire chiefs and its provision generally requiring officers of a municipal corporation to be electors of the municipal corporation, explicitly stating that city and village fire chiefs are not required by the Revised Code to be an *elector* or a *resident* of the municipal corporation, thereby removing the current statutory requirement that fire chiefs as municipal "officers" be an elector, and thus a resident, of the municipal corporation (secs. 733.68(B), 737.08(A), and 737.22(A)). (See **COMMENT** for the effects of these changes on municipal corporations.) The bill does not affect, however, village fire prevention officers.

COMMENT

Although the bill makes changes in statutory law regarding municipal corporations, those changes do not affect a municipal corporation's constitutionally granted "home rule" powers to provide otherwise. If a municipal charter were to adopt the relevant sections of the Revised Code as amended by the bill, the charter would in effect (via those statutes) not require the fire chief to be a municipal resident. However, a municipal corporation, with or without a charter, could adopt an ordinance requiring the fire chief to be a resident or elector of the municipal corporation.¹ In that case, these Revised Code sections would have no effect in that municipal corporation.²

HISTORY

ACTION	DATE	JOURNAL ENTRY
Introduced	03-06-01	p. 212
Reported, H. Local Government and Townships	04-05-01	p. 296

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¹ *A municipal charter, instead of an ordinance, could also require the fire chief to be a municipal resident.*

² *Although a noncharter municipal corporation must follow statutes regarding procedural matters dealing with self-government issues, it does not have to follow statutes regarding substantive matters unless the matter is one of statewide concern. To be a matter of statewide concern, the matter must have significant extraterritorial effects or affect the general public of the state as a whole more than it does the local inhabitants. It seems that a residency requirement for officers who serve within a municipal corporation is predominantly a local matter. Thus, statutory changes would not affect a local residency requirement.*