

- Total appropriated budget increased 13% from the FY 2000-2001 biennium to the FY 2002-2003 biennium
- Expanded consumer outreach & education initiatives

Office of Consumers' Counsel

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ROLE

The Ohio Office of Consumers' Counsel (OCC) provides representation for the residential consumers of Ohio's investor-owned electric, natural gas, water and telephone companies in utility proceedings before the Public Utilities Commission, at federal regulatory agencies, and in our court system. The OCC also educates consumers on utility issues and resolves complaints individual ratepayers may have with utility providers.

Agency In Brief					
Number of Employees	Total Appropriations-All Funds		GRF Appropriations		Appropriation Bill(s)
	2002	2003	2002	2003	
77.5	\$8.6 million	\$9.2 million	\$0	\$0	Am. Sub. H.B. 94

OVERVIEW

The OCC was fully funded at requested levels for the FY 2002-2003 biennium at \$17,837,700. The OCC's total appropriated budget increased 13 percent from the FY 2000-2001 to the FY 2002-2003 biennium. The OCC's total appropriated budget increased by 11.9 percent from FY 2001 to FY 2002, although compared to FY 2001 actual expenditures, FY 2002 appropriations are 18.3 percent higher. (The OCC was appropriated \$15,779,344 for the FY 2000-2001 biennium but actual expenditures totaled \$14,006,292, a difference of \$1,773,052.) Appropriations increase 8.3 percent from FY 2002 to FY 2003. Funding levels for the biennium will allow the OCC to hire an additional six employees in FY 2002 and two employees in FY 2003. The additional employees will provide additional consumer support to respond to increased consumer demand for assistance in representation, compliance, and education as a result of continued changes in the utility environment, specifically, the natural gas choice program, electric deregulation, natural gas and electric aggregation and telecommunication regulatory guidelines. The OCC is funded through assessments on the intrastate gross receipts of the state's investor owned utility companies with a minimum assessment of \$50. Any moneys not spent in one year are credited against next year's assessments. The OCC's budget costs residential consumers approximately four cents of every \$100 paid in utility bills. 

FY 2002 - 2003 Final Appropriation Amounts

All Fund Groups

Line Item Detail by Agency			FY 1999:	FY 2000:	FY 2001:	FY 2002 Appropriations:	% Change 2001 to 2002:	FY 2003 Appropriations:	% Change 2002 to 2003:
Report For: Main Operating Appropriations Bill			Version: Enacted						
OCC Consumers' Counsel, Office of									
GRF	053-100	Personal Services	\$ 0	\$ 0		\$ 0	N/A	\$ 0	N/A
GRF	053-320	Maintenance And Equipment	\$ 0	\$ 0		\$ 0	N/A	\$ 0	N/A
GRF	053-401	Consultants	\$ 0	\$ 0		\$ 0	N/A	\$ 0	N/A
General Revenue Fund Total			\$ 0	\$ 0	----	\$ 0	N/A	\$ 0	N/A
5F5	053-601	Operating Expenses	\$ 6,092,251	\$ 6,768,545	\$7,237,747	\$ 8,560,182	18.27%	\$ 9,277,518	8.38%
General Services Fund Group Total			\$ 6,092,251	\$ 6,768,545	\$ 7,237,747	\$ 8,560,182	18.27%	\$ 9,277,518	8.38%
Consumers' Counsel, Office of Total			\$ 6,092,251	\$ 6,768,545	\$ 7,237,747	\$ 8,560,182	18.27%	\$ 9,277,518	8.38%