
Detailed Fiscal Analysis

This bill prohibits an entity from placing a child who is adjudicated delinquent because of certain acts into a foster home until the entity provides foster caregivers with information about the child's social history. This includes the acts the child committed resulting in the delinquency adjudication; other violent acts the child committed; any threat the child poses to the foster caregivers or community and psychiatric and psychological examinations of the child.

The purpose of this bill is to ensure that foster caregivers are given all the information that is available about a child who is to be placed in their home. More specifically, it targets those children presently adjudicated delinquent and those who have prior adjudications of delinquency. According to a spokesperson with the Ohio Association of Public Children Services Agencies, there are nearly 2,300 children adjudicated delinquent or unruly each year.

If the entities required to divulge information about these children prior to their placement must pay for the cost of the psychological or psychiatric testing, expenditures for such entities would increase. However, if such entities use existing community resources to access psychological services using Medicaid, such expenditures could be partially paid by the federal government. The federal government would pay nearly 60 percent of the cost.

The public children services agencies and the juvenile courts may incur some additional administrative costs associated with the provision of information to foster caregivers. The level of increase is indeterminate.

The bill also stipulates that if the Department of Youth Services places a child in a foster home with the assistance of a PCSA or similar agency it must pay the expenses associated with a new psychological examination. In addition, the bill changes the terminology associated with the Title IV-E Child Welfare Training fund from "fee" to "special assessment", thereby potentially avoiding any federal funding penalties.

□ *LBO staff: Clarence Campbell, Senior Analyst*

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