



- This bill refines the language pertaining to the formulation of county dog registration and kennel fees. Provisions in the bill state the amount of fees must not exceed estimates of administration and injured animal claims. These changes would have very little fiscal effect.
- The bill extends the deadline for dog registrations from January 20 to January 31 of each year, and removes the requirement that there be an emergency before the board of county commissioners can make this change. This provision would result in little or no change in revenues.
- Lastly, allowing law enforcement officers to obtain an unneeded police dog or horse for one dollar would have little fiscal effect.

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## ***Detailed Fiscal Analysis***

### **Background of the Bill**

This bill allows the State Highway Patrol, county sheriffs' offices, law enforcement agencies of municipalities and townships, and joint township police districts to register dogs used for law enforcement without a fee. Specifically, these law enforcement agencies may choose between registering their dogs as law enforcement canines without a fee, or obtaining a regular annual registration. The bill also states that, upon proper proof of loss, a duplicate certificate and accompanying tag must be issued at no fee. Currently, registrations cost \$2 to \$10 apiece.

Law enforcement canines are classified into three categories: specialty, general, and dual purpose duty. Specialty dogs are used for activities such as narcotics detection and explosives and accelerant detection. General duty canines, or utility dogs, are used for tracking and general searches. Dual purpose canines perform duties of both specialty and general duty dogs. According to the state contact of the North American Police Working Dogs Association, the majority of dogs used in law enforcement are classified as dual purpose dogs. In Ohio 267 dogs are certified for law enforcement. However, this representative is aware of at least 150-200 other dogs used for such purposes that are not certified.

### **Potential Savings and Costs**

The State Highway Patrol would no longer cover the costs of registrations for law enforcement dogs. According to a contact person from the department, only 14 dogs are used for specialty services – the number of general duty canines could not be obtained. Therefore, the state would save up to \$140 or more for FYs 1998 and 1999, unless more dogs are obtained.

Counties are responsible for accepting and filing dog registrations and so they would be the only entities to lose money under this bill. Counties would lose the revenues they would have obtained if the law enforcement dogs had been registered as regular dogs. However, due to the small number of dogs used for law enforcement, the loss in revenues would be small.

In Ohio the highest concentration of law enforcement canines is in Cuyahoga and Franklin counties; Cuyahoga County has 15-20 dogs for such use, Franklin uses 12 dogs, and the Cleveland Police Department uses about five dogs. The State Highway Patrol's 14 dogs are located in different counties, so the impact for any one county would be minimal.

This bill refines the language pertaining to the formulation of county dog registration and kennel fees. Present law requires the following formula:

$\begin{aligned} &(\textit{Registration fee}) * (\textit{\# of dog and kennel} \\ &\textit{registrations for} \\ &\textit{preceding year}) \end{aligned} = \begin{aligned} &(\textit{Aggregate injured} \\ &\textit{animal claims}) \end{aligned} + \begin{aligned} &(\textit{debts from} \\ &\textit{claims}) \end{aligned} + \begin{aligned} &(\textit{administration costs}) \end{aligned}$
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This formula basically provides for the counties' costs of registrations to be covered. Provisions in the bill state the amount of fees must not exceed estimates of administration and injured animal claims. These changes would have very little fiscal effect.

□ *LBO staff: Sybil N. Haney, Budget/Policy Analyst*

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