

Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

122nd General Assembly of Ohio

BILL: H.B. 558

DATE: October 21, 1997

STATUS: As Introduced

SPONSOR: Rep. Wise

LOCAL IMPACT STATEMENT REQUIRED: Yes

CONTENTS: To extend workers' compensation benefits to off-duty police officers employed by counties, cities, villages, and townships who are injured or killed while responding to an emergency

State Fiscal Highlights

STATE FUND	FY 1998	FY 1999	FUTURE YEARS
State Insurance Fund			
Revenues	Potential gain corresponding to expenditures	Potential gain corresponding to expenditures	Potential gain corresponding to expenditures
Expenditures	Potential increase depending on number of claims	Potential increase depending on number of claims	Potential increase depending on number of claims

- Workers' compensation benefits extended to off-duty police officers may result in increased expenditures from the State Insurance Fund.
- In order to adjust for any increased expenditures from the State Insurance Fund, the Bureau of Workers' Compensation would likely increase premiums charged to the police departments affected by this bill.

Local Fiscal Highlights

LOCAL GOVERNMENT	FY 1998	FY 1999	FUTURE YEARS
Political Subdivisions			
Revenues	-0-	-0-	-0-
Expenditures	Potential increase depending on number of claims	Potential increase depending on number of claims	Potential increase depending on number of claims

- For most political subdivisions, any added costs related to this extension of workers' compensation coverage would be relatively small.
- Cities, villages, and townships with small police departments could face dramatically higher workers' compensation premium rates. For example, a single claim filed by an off-duty township police officer injured while responding to an emergency could increase that subdivision's workers' compensation premiums substantially.



Detailed Fiscal Analysis

The bill may increase benefits expenditures from the State Insurance Fund, but it is difficult to estimate the additional annual cost of the bill for local governments and political subdivisions affected. The smallest police departments are most likely to absorb the greatest impact, because a single injury or lost claim filed by an off-duty police officer could cause the entire political subdivision's premiums to rise dramatically.

Workers' Compensation Claims Reported Currently by Police Departments

Currently the Bureau of Workers' Compensation, local governments and political subdivisions maintain records of the number of claims filed by police officers who are injured *on the job*. Table 1 below displays such claims reported to the BWC by sheriffs' offices, city, village, and township police departments during Calendar Years 1994-1996.

Table 1. Claims Reported to BWC from Selected Police Jurisdictions, CY1994-CY1996.

Source of Claim Reported to BWC	Calendar Year 1994	Calendar Year 1995	Calendar Year 1996
County Sheriffs	718	737	731
City Police	2,934	2,932	2,840
Village Police	224	212	183
Township Police	162	190	177
Total	4,038	4,071	3,931

None of the police departments affected by the bill currently tracks the number of *off-duty* officers injured while responding to an emergency. Consequently, it is difficult to establish an estimate of the number of off-duty police officers who would become eligible to file workers' compensation claims as a result of this bill.

Firefighters' and Police Officers' Eligibility for Additional Compensable Occupational Diseases

Current law, O.R.C. 4123.68, allows injured workers to make claims for a specified schedule of occupational diseases. Under O.R.C. 4123.68(W), police officers and firefighters are entitled to compensation for additional occupational diseases, including cardiovascular, pulmonary, or respiratory diseases caused by heat, smoke, toxic gases, chemical fumes, and other toxic gases to which they may have been exposed while at work. Injured firefighters or police officers are awarded these additional benefits only if the claim is ruled a 1) Temporary Total Disability; 2) Permanent Total Disability; or 3) Death benefits. These additional awards may increase the value of an injured police officer's compensation award, and thus increase expenditures from the State Insurance Fund. Some of the off-duty police officers made eligible to receive workers' compensation under provisions of this bill would presumably file such occupational disease claims.

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