

# ***Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement***

122<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly of Ohio

REVISED

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**BILL:** Sub. S.B.5 (LSC 122 0126-1)

**DATE:** June 2, 1997

**STATUS:** In Senate Ways and Means

**SPONSOR:** Sen. Howard

**LOCAL IMPACT STATEMENT REQUIRED:** Yes Local cost was in the introduced version

**CONTENTS:** Establishes State training and continuing education for emergency service telecommunicators

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## ***State Fiscal Highlights***

<b>STATE FUND</b>	<b>FY 1998</b>	<b>FY 1999</b>	<b>FUTURE YEARS</b>
<b>General Revenue Fund</b>			
Revenues	\$500,000 loss	\$500,000 loss	\$450,000 loss
Expenditures	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -
<b>Emergency Service Telecommunicator Training Fund</b>			
Revenues	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -
Expenditures	\$300,000 to \$400,000 increase	\$350,000 increase	\$350,000 increase

- FY 1998 costs include development and implementation of the program in the first year.
- FY 1999 and subsequent years include training for new employees, continuing education and administration.
- The bill appropriates \$500,000 in FYs 1998 and 1999 from non-GRF sources. However, the future source of funds for these appropriations is a transfer from the state's GRF.
- The bill does not include GRF appropriations.

## ***Local Fiscal Highlights***

- No direct fiscal effect on local governments.



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## ***Detailed Fiscal Analysis***

This bill establishes a standard training certification and continuing education program for emergency medical communicators. The standards for the initial training program and continuing education include the following:

- A minimum of 40 hours of instruction for new employees and 8 hours of instruction for continuing education, including training on: role of telecommunicator, effective communication skills, emergency service telecommunicator liability, telephone techniques, compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990, addressing hysterical and suicidal callers, law enforcement terminology, emergency call processing guides for law enforcement, fire service, and emergency medical service, radio techniques, disaster planning, scene safety and officer survival

The training programs must be offered at least 8 times per year, usually at different board approved vocational education centers around the state as well as by the State Board of Education. The program will be voluntary. However given the experiences of states that do have such volunteer programs, many times the local employer mandates the training for the employees.

Financing for the training will come from the newly established Emergency Service Telecommunicator Training Fund. Although monies for the Emergency Service Telecommunicator Fund will eventually come from a cash transfer from the General Revenue Fund, no GRF appropriations are present in the bill.

### ***STATE FISCAL EFFECTS***

#### **Training Estimates**

In the state of Ohio, there are 7,000 operators statewide with an annual turnover rate of 20%. Given the experiences of the four states that have volunteer telecommunicator training programs, approximately 65 to 75 percent of dispatchers become certified. Based on estimates from the State Vocational Education Department, a 40-hour class with an average of 20 students would cost \$60 per hour, resulting in a potential \$110,000 to \$125,000 increase in expenditures.

The 8-hour continuing education program would be needed for half the employees every other year. So in a given year 3,500 operators would need the continued training. Based on estimates from the State Vocational Education Department, an 8-hour class with an average of twenty students would cost \$60 per hour, resulting in a potential \$40,000 to \$50,000 annual increase in expenditures.

Administrative costs for developing and implementing the E.M.S. telecommunicator standard are estimated to be \$200,000 the first year and \$150,000 per year thereafter. All of these estimates assume no significant increase in personnel in the emergency telecommunicator field or significant responsibility changes for the operators.

The E.M.S. telecommunicator funding is unique when compared to the other adult training programs (like Fire and Emergency Medical Technician) funded by the state at a rate of \$8 per hour per student under the Adult Education line item.

Currently most states already have or are considering legislation on the creation of an EMS telecommunicator standard. The three common methods of funding the training are through state appropriations (10 states), local appropriation (10 states) and through revenues generated from a telephone tax (8 states). While training periods vary from state to state, the average number of hours is 40, a standard currently used in Mississippi, North Dakota, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. Three states have volunteer training programs: Idaho, Montana, and Utah.

### ***LOCAL FISCAL EFFECTS***

Though the training program is voluntary in nature, the program may essentially become a requirement for local departments. Untrained telecommunicators could leave local departments open to liability lawsuits. The training program would become the expected standard of care; thus untrained individuals do not meet that standard. Representatives from the volunteer training states stated that this liability potential presented a great concern.

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