
Detailed Fiscal Analysis

Overview of changes

The resolution makes several changes to the process by which General Assembly and Congressional districts are determined. First, it changes the membership of the Apportionment Board, which is responsible for the redistricting process for the General Assembly, to include the Governor, the Auditor of State, the Secretary of State, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, the President of the Senate, and the Minority Leader of the Senate. Next, the resolution gives the Apportionment Board the responsibility of drawing Congressional districts, a process currently decided by the General Assembly. In addition to these changes, the resolution requires five votes of the seven members to approve a Congressional and General Assembly redistricting plan, instead of a simple majority as under current law. The resolution also gives an applicable federal court, in addition to the Ohio Supreme Court, jurisdiction for any court challenges that arise as a result of a redistricting plan approved by the Board.

Redistricting costs – Apportionment Board

It appears as though the resolution would not result in any new net costs related to the process of developing redistricting plans. The Legislative Task Force on Redistricting, the panel that handled the redistricting process after the 2000 Census – and which was funded through the Legislative Service Commission's budget – provided the Apportionment Board with the population and demographic research assistance related to redistricting at that time. Task Force expenditures were \$610,044 in FY 2000, \$327,060 in FY 2001, and \$971,855 in FY 2002. Shifting the responsibility for Congressional redistricting to the Apportionment Board would not result in any new costs. Finally, concerning any possible legal challenges, the General Assembly would be required to appropriate amounts to defend the adopted Congressional and General Assembly redistricting plans from any lawsuit. As under current practice, the Attorney General would be responsible for defending these plans.

Ballot advertising and printing costs – Secretary of State

There would also be costs associated with the required advertising of this issue in a newspaper of general circulation in each county. The costs of advertising would depend on the length of the ballot language. As a recent example, ballot advertising costs for State Issue 1, the referendum on Sub. S.B. 16, which restricted the operations of adult-oriented businesses and that was to have been placed on the November 6, 2007 ballot, were about \$317,000. This included costs incurred in 63 of 88 counties, before the measure was invalidated. While the language of this resolution would likely be shorter than that of State Issue 1, it can reasonably be assumed that the total advertising costs would be in the range of \$300,000.

A provision of H.B. 119, the FY 2008-FY 2009 budget bill, changed the way ballot-advertising costs are paid for. Previously, counties paid for those expenses and sought reimbursement from the Secretary of State's Office. Under the new procedure, the Secretary of State's Office pays for this directly. However, the funding source for this remains the same:

Transfers from Controlling Board GRF appropriation item 911-441, Ballot Advertising Costs, which has an appropriation of \$1.4 million in FY 2008 and \$300,000 in FY 2009. Finally, there would be some costs associated with ballot printing. As this would be an issue appearing on the ballot statewide, the Secretary of State's Office would incur those costs. Although the ballot printing costs are unknown, these costs would be considerably less than advertising costs since most ballots are now electronic.

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