Ohio Legislative Service Commission

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Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

Bill: H.B. 286 of the 130th G.A. **Date**: May 22, 2014

Status: As Reported by Senate State Government Oversight & Reform **Sponsor**: Reps. Sears and Letson

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: No

Contents: Authorizes the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council to meet via interactive video conference or teleconference

State Fiscal Highlights

- The Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council may realize a minimal increase in costs related to obtaining or using video or teleconferencing equipment, which may be offset by a minimal amount of savings related to Council member travel reimbursement. The Council is federally funded.

Local Fiscal Highlights

- No direct fiscal effect on political subdivisions.

Detailed Fiscal Analysis

The bill permits the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council (ODDC) to meet via video conference or teleconference if certain conditions apply. To hold a meeting by video conference, a primary meeting location that is open to the public must be established and a clear video and audio connection must be established. Additionally, a roll call vote must be recorded for each vote and the meeting minutes must identify which members participated via video conference. To hold a meeting by teleconference, similar conditions must be met, though the Council must determine that it does not have access to the equipment needed to conduct a video conference.

The bill also requires the ODDC to adopt rules it considers necessary to hold meetings via video conference or teleconference. At minimum, the rules must authorize Council members to attend meetings via video or teleconference and establish a minimum number of members who must be physically present at the primary meeting location. Additionally, the rules must establish geographic restrictions for participation, a policy for distributing necessary documents in advance, as well as a method of verifying the identity of a Council member who attends a meeting via teleconference.

ODDC may realize an increase in costs related to obtaining or using video or teleconferencing equipment, which may be offset by savings associated with Council member travel reimbursement. According to a spokesperson from ODDC, additional potential savings include reduced payments for personal care attendants of Council members who are individuals with disabilities, as ODDC ensures that Council members do not incur personal expenses for performing Council business. The Council also covers expenses related to lodging, meals, and child care for Council members when attending Council meetings.

Generally, ODDC holds their meetings at hotels in central Ohio. Savings will depend on the number of members who attend meetings remotely, as well as hotel rates. Costs will depend on the amount charged by the hotel where the meeting is located for video or teleconferencing equipment, phone lines, and long distance calls. Previous teleconferencing pilot programs conducted by ODDC yielded minimal net savings. ODDC anticipates that any costs or savings for the Council due to the provisions of the bill will be minimal. ODDC is funded by federal Developmental Disabilities Basic Support and Advocacy Grants.

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