Ohio Legislative Service Commission

Maggie Wolniewicz

Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

Bill: S.B. 177 of the 130th G.A. **Date**: March 10, 2014

Status: As Introduced **Sponsor**: Sen. Skindell

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: No

Contents: Protection of companion animals in protection orders

State Fiscal Highlights

- No direct fiscal effect on the state.

Local Fiscal Highlights

- The bill may result in a minimal increase in the annual operating costs incurred by county and municipal justice systems to prosecute and sanction criminal violations and issue protection orders.

Detailed Fiscal Analysis

The bill permits a court to include protections for a companion animal within the scope of a protection order. In such a case, the companion animal protections will be automatically given, so additional hearings specifically related to this issue will not need to be held by the court. By not having to hold additional hearings, the court is able to avoid creating additional operating expenses when extending these protections. The number of new cases for violating a protection order based solely on the new prohibition regarding a companion animal is likely to be very small. Any violations that are the result of physical trauma to the companion animal are likely to be prosecuted under the cruelty to animal statutes under current law. Any violations that are the result of nonviolent behavior are likely to include violations regarding other prohibitions, such as residential or personal distance requirements or no contact requirements granted to the petitioner. Therefore, this new protection is likely to be used as an added condition of violation pertaining to protection orders that would otherwise be pursued under current law.

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