



Ohio Legislative Service Commission

Tom Wert

Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

Bill: [S.B. 192 of the 130th G.A.](#)

Date: November 12, 2013

Status: As Introduced

Sponsor: Sen. Manning

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: No

Contents: Grants the Director of Agriculture sole and exclusive authority to regulate invasive plant species

State Fiscal Highlights

- The bill grants the Director of Agriculture sole and exclusive authority to regulate invasive plant species. Although the bill could have fiscal implications for the Department of Agriculture, in particular the Division of Plant Health, any new costs that are incurred will depend on the extent of the regulatory program developed under the bill.
- The Division of Plant Health currently oversees various programs addressing invasive plant species and noxious weeds. These activities are supported by the Commercial Feed and Seed Fund (Fund 4C90) and the Plant Pest Program Fund (Fund 5FC0).

Local Fiscal Highlights

- No apparent direct fiscal effect on political subdivisions.

Detailed Fiscal Analysis

The bill grants the Director of Agriculture the sole and exclusive authority to regulate invasive plant species. Under the bill, invasive plant species are defined as plant species that are not native to Ohio and whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm, or harm to human health as determined by scientific studies. Regulations addressing invasive plant species adopted under this authority could potentially have fiscal implications for the Department of Agriculture (AGR), in particular the Division of Plant Health which is responsible for the Department's existing efforts at tracking and controlling invasive species such as kudzu and hogweed. While the Division of Plant Health already has programs in place that address invasive plant species, it is not clear exactly what new costs the Division would incur under the bill. The Division of Plant Health is supported by inspection fees paid by commercial feed dealers for feed inspections and nursery stock and inspection fees paid by nurseries. Fees are deposited into the Commercial Feed and Seed Fund (Fund 4C90) and the Plant Pest Program Fund (Fund 5FC0).

In addition, placing sole and exclusive authority to regulate invasive plants with AGR may have some impact on invasive plant programs overseen by the Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) Division of Forestry. These programs are geared toward advising owners of woodlands and assisting local communities with the control and abatement of invasive plant species. However, it is unclear to what extent these existing services offered by the Division of Forestry might be affected under the bill. The Division of Forestry within DNR is supported by proceeds from land sales, easements, leases, rents, federal grants, and timber sales deposited into the State Forest Fund (Fund 5090), the Timber Sales Redistribution Fund (Fund R043), and the GRF. Finally, although various municipalities operate urban forestry programs, it is unclear what impact the bill will have on local initiatives aimed at controlling invasive plant species. Such programs typically involve the coordination of volunteer efforts to remove honeysuckle or other undesired invasive plants growing in parklands and forests.