



State Senator William P. Coley II
Senate Bill 70 Sponsor Testimony
Senate Judiciary Committee
March 28, 2017

Chairman Bacon, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, thank you the opportunity to testify on behalf of Senate Bill 70. Senate Bill 70 seeks to update and streamline the Ohio Child Support Program for the benefit of Ohio's families.

This legislation was brought to my attention in response to the work of the Shareholders' Reform Group of 2002 comprised of legislators, members of the judiciary, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services representatives, county CSEA professionals, and mothers and fathers groups. As a result, this bill implements necessary administrative changes that close unintended loopholes and create consistency in the processes without affecting the substantive rights of the parties. Senate Bill 70 provides consistency of time frames for administrative appeals, a major simplification for all parties involved in the process. Additionally, this bill allows for more actions to be completed administratively, saving courts and parties the time and expense of a court hearing.

Senate Bill 70 contains the following improvements:

- Clarifies that a child support enforcement agency (CSEA) may order a mother to pay child support. Currently, a CSEA can only order a father to pay support in an administrative order.
- Clarifies a uniform effective date for an administrative support orders to bring consistency statewide, as there are currently a variety of effective dates being used county to county.
- Expedites the process for administrative review and adjustment, by shortening the review period from 45 days to 30 days. This will help parties get their child support orders reviewed and adjusted more quickly.
- Clarifies the reasons for administrative termination of an order, including recognizing the marriage of the parents to one another as a reason to terminate a child support order. Additionally, the legislation clarifies when a CSEA can terminate an order and when an order has to be terminated through a court.

- Changes all administrative appeal periods to fourteen days. This will provide greater consistency in the process, as appeal periods currently vary, from five day periods to seven to ten to fourteen to thirty. This will also align CSEA appeal periods with those provided in the court process.
- Allows a CSEA to add or modify an arrearage payment when the CSEA is modifying the current support obligations.
- When parties fail to appear at the support hearing (after proper notice), this proposal allows a CSEA to make reasonable assumptions about income when establishing orders, similar to the existing authority currently used in modification orders. This brings the two processes in line with each other. Parents still retain their right to object to the order once issued.
- Lump sum intercepts are changed to an administrative process to expedite the process.
- To ensure that a CSEA receives federal reimbursement for labor intensive processes, this legislation requires that the case have a completed IV-D application on file.
- Allows for modifications of payment amount in arrears-only cases, giving express authorization to CSEAs to modify the payment under appropriate circumstances. Currently, there is no such express authority in the state.

Senate Bill 70 fine-tunes the child support administrative processes. The administrative changes in this legislation are important for providing consistency and efficiency in these processes.

If all of this sounds familiar to you, Senate Bill 70 is identical to Substitute Senate Bill 308 from the 131st General Assembly, which passed out of the Senate unanimously.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to share sponsor testimony on Senate Bill 70. I am happy to answer any questions at this time.