



# OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

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## Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

**Bill:** H.B. 126 of the 132nd G.A.

**Status:** As Introduced

**Sponsor:** Reps. Boyd and Rezabek

**Local Impact Statement Procedure Required:** No

**Subject:** Statewide region-based kinship caregiver navigator program

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### State & Local Fiscal Highlights

- The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) will spend about \$6.5 million annually to operate the statewide program of kinship care navigators required by the bill. ODJFS may be permitted to spend federal funds for the program.
- Public children services agencies that currently operate navigator programs might realize a decrease in costs since ODJFS will be responsible for the cost of operating the statewide program.

### Detailed Fiscal Analysis

The bill requires ODJFS to operate a statewide program of kinship care navigators at an estimated cost of \$6.5 million per year; under current law, the program is permissive. The bill requires the ODJFS Director to divide the state into five to 12 regions for the program. Each region will be responsible to provide kinship navigator services for kinship caregivers within its region. Kinship care navigators assist kinship caregivers in obtaining information, services, and benefits available at the state and local level.

The estimated cost is based on a three-year Family Connections grant Ohio received from 2009-2012. Under this grant, kinship services similar to those required in the bill were provided in seven counties to about 5.5% of the state's total kinship placements at a cost of about \$300,000 per year. ODJFS estimates that scaling this program to the entire state would cost \$6.5 million annually.

The bill further requires the ODJFS Director to submit a state plan amendment to make federal payments for kinship care navigators under Title IV-A of the Social Security Act, which encompasses Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). Any state funds used for the program will count towards Ohio's maintenance-of-effort spending for TANF. ODJFS may also be permitted to use part of the federal TANF Block Grant for the program.

The bill specifies that no county departments of job and family services or public children services agency will be responsible for the program's cost. As a result, public children services agencies that currently operate navigator programs may realize a decrease in costs. According to the Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO) however, there are few counties that operate such programs.

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