



# Ohio Legislative Service Commission

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## Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

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**Bill:** Sub. H.B. 369 of the 129th G.A.

**Date:** December 14, 2011

**Status:** As Reported by House Rules & Reference

**Sponsor:** Rep. Huffman

**Local Impact Statement Procedure Required:** No

**Contents:** Redraws Ohio's congressional district lines, establishes a single March 6, 2012 primary for all candidates for office, makes other related changes, and declares an emergency

### State Fiscal Highlights

- The bill redraws U.S. congressional district lines in Ohio based on the 2010 decennial census. Because of the slow rate of population growth in Ohio compared to other states in the nation, the number of congressional districts in Ohio must be reduced from 18 to 16.
- The bill establishes a single primary election on March 6, 2012 and repeals provisions of H.B. 318 of the 129th General Assembly that establishes separate March and June primaries in that year. The bill also repeals an appropriation made in H.B. 318 to reimburse county boards of elections for the cost of the June primary that has been estimated to cost approximately \$15 million statewide.
- The bill creates the Redistricting Reform Task Force, comprised of eight members of the General Assembly, equally divided between members of the two major political parties. The task force is required to create a redistricting reform proposal for consideration by the General Assembly in 2012. The expenses of the Task Force would be paid from GRF appropriations for the House of Representatives and Senate.

### Local Fiscal Highlights

- County boards of elections will incur some new costs for remapping and redistricting as a result of the new redistricting plan adopted by the General Assembly. H.B. 319 of the 129th General Assembly appropriated \$2.75 million to cover these costs.
- The bill establishes a single primary election on March 6, 2012 and repeals provisions of H.B. 318 of the 129th General Assembly that establishes March and June primaries in that year. As a result, county boards of elections will avoid the cost of conducting the June primary. The cost of holding the June primary has been estimated to be approximately \$15 million statewide.

- The bill also repeals provisions of H.B. 318 that prohibit special elections in August of 2012, but permit them to be held in conjunction with the June primary election. Under H.B. 318, political subdivisions holding a special election in conjunction with the June primary do not bear the full cost of the special election. However, under the bill, political subdivisions holding a special election in August do bear the full cost.
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## **Detailed Fiscal Analysis**

### **Congressional district lines**

The bill establishes U.S. congressional district boundaries for the state based on the 2010 decennial census of Ohio. Based on this census data, the state of Ohio saw a reduction of two congressional seats, lowering the number of districts in Ohio from 18 to 16. The 88 county boards of elections will incur new costs for carrying out the redistricting plan. To assist with implementing the redistricting plan, H.B. 319 of the 129th General Assembly created GRF line item 911404, Mandate Assistance, with an FY 2012 appropriation of \$2.75 million, in the Controlling Board's budget. This appropriation is to be used to cover the costs incurred for remapping and reprecincting counties, as well as reprogramming database systems and voting machines.

The bill also establishes a single primary election for all candidates seeking elected office on March 6, 2012. As a result of this change, county boards of election will avoid the cost of holding a June 2012 primary for candidates seeking federal office. The bill also eliminates a provision of H.B. 319 that requires county boards of elections to send out mailings to registered voters containing information regarding the date of the election, the precinct in which the voter should vote, and the congressional district in which the voter lives. As a result, county boards of elections will not be required to incur these notification costs. Finally, the bill exempts the Secretary of State and county boards of elections from competitive bidding requirements for ballot printing and ballot preparation for the March 6, 2012 primary election.

### **Primary election date**

The bill repeals provisions of Sub. H.B. 318 of the 129th General Assembly which establish two primary elections in 2012, one in March and one in June. With the repeal of these provisions, there will be a single March primary election in 2012. H.B. 318 also requires the state to reimburse county boards of elections for the costs of conducting the June primary election, and appropriates the amount necessary to make this reimbursement from the GRF. While H.B. 318 does not appropriate a specific dollar amount, the cost for the June primary election has been estimated to be approximately \$15 million. Since the cost of a second primary will now be avoided, the bill repeals both this reimbursement requirement and the associated GRF appropriation.

## **Special elections**

The bill also repeals provisions of H.B. 318 that prohibit special elections in August of 2012, but permit them to be held in conjunction with the June primary election. Continuing law requires that the political subdivision holding a special election on a day other than the day of a primary or general election pay all the costs associated with that election. So, under H.B. 318, political subdivisions holding a special election in conjunction with the June primary do not bear the full cost of the special election. However, under the bill, political subdivisions holding a special election in August do bear the full cost.

## **Redistricting Reform Task Force**

The bill creates the Redistricting Reform Task Force. The Task Force is to be composed of eight members, equally divided between members of the two major political parties. The task force is required to create a redistricting reform proposal for consideration by the General Assembly in 2012. The Task Force is required to hold a minimum of three public hearings, one of which shall be conducted after the Task Force issues its report, which is due by June 30, 2012. Presumably, any expenses that the Task Force incurs would be paid from the GRF appropriations for both the House of Representatives and Senate.