

**As Introduced**

**134th General Assembly**

**Regular Session**

**2021-2022**

**H. B. No. 666**

**Representatives West, Ingram**

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**A BILL**

To create a rent rebate pilot program and to  
transfer funds and make an appropriation to  
support the program.

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**BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF OHIO:**

**Section 1.** As used in this act:

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(A) "Claimant" means a person who files a claim for a rent  
rebate with the Department of Commerce for rent paid during the  
preceding calendar year.

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(B) "Household income" means all income received by a  
claimant and the claimant's spouse while residing in the  
residential rental property during the calendar year for which a  
rebate is claimed.

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(C) (1) "Income" means, subject to divisions (C) (2) and (3)  
of this section, all income from whatever source derived,  
including all of the following:

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(a) Salaries, wages, bonuses, commissions, income from  
self-employment, alimony, support money, and cash public  
assistance and relief;

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(b) The gross amount of any pensions or annuities;

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(c) All benefits received from unemployment insurance;	19
(d) All interest received from the federal or any state government or any political subdivision;	20 21
(e) Realized capital gains and rentals;	22
(f) Workers' compensation benefits.	23
(2) "Income" includes all of the following:	24
(a) Fifty per cent of all benefits received under the "Social Security Act," 42 U.S.C. 301 et seq., except medicare benefits;	25 26 27
(b) The gross amount of loss of time insurance benefits, life insurance benefits and proceeds, except the first five thousand dollars of the total death benefit payments;	28 29 30
(c) Gifts of cash or property, other than transfers by gift between members of a household, in excess of a total value of three hundred dollars.	31 32 33
(3) "Income" does not include medicare benefits, surplus food or other relief in kind supplied by a governmental agency, a property tax or rent rebate or inflation dividend, or federal veterans' disability payments or state veterans' benefits.	34 35 36 37
(D) "Permanently disabled person" means a person who is unable to engage in any substantial gainful activity by reason of any medically determinable physical or mental impairment that can be expected to continue indefinitely.	38 39 40 41
(E) "Residential rental property" means real property consisting of one or more dwelling units leased or otherwise rented to tenants solely for residential purposes and occupied by the claimant. "Residential rental property" includes a	42 43 44 45

manufactured home, as defined in section 3781.06 of the Revised 46  
Code, a mobile home, or recreational vehicle, as defined in 47  
section 4501.01 of the Revised Code, that is used solely for 48  
residential purposes. "Residential rental property" does not 49  
include a hotel or a college or university dormitory. 50

(F) "State veterans' benefits" means service-connected 51  
compensation or benefits of any kind provided to a veteran or 52  
unmarried surviving spouse of a veteran by an agency of this 53  
state or authorized under the laws of this state. 54

(G) "Widow" or "widower" means the surviving spouse who 55  
has not remarried. 56

**Section 2.** (A) The Department of Commerce shall establish 57  
a two-year pilot program in which low-income elderly and 58  
disabled persons may apply to the Department to receive a cash 59  
payment for a portion of their rent paid the preceding calendar 60  
year. 61

(B) In order to be eligible for the program, the person 62  
shall qualify as any of the following at the time the rental 63  
payment became due and payable in the preceding calendar year: 64

(1) The person or the person's spouse who is a member of 65  
the household was at least sixty-five years of age. 66

(2) The person was a widow or widower and was at least 67  
fifty years of age. 68

(3) The person was a permanently disabled person eighteen 69  
years of age or older. 70

(C) The amount of any claim for a rent rebate for rent due 71  
and payable during the preceding calendar year shall be 72  
determined by the following: 73

(1) If the household income is fifteen thousand dollars or less, the amount of rent rebate is six hundred fifty dollars.	74 75
(2) If the household income is greater than fifteen thousand dollars and equal to or less than twenty-five thousand dollars, the amount of rent rebate is five hundred dollars.	76 77 78
(D) The maximum amount of rent rebate payable to a claimant shall not exceed the lesser of either of the following:	79 80
(1) The amount of the claim under division (C) of this section;	81 82
(2) Twenty per cent of the gross rent actually paid.	83
(E) The Department shall apportion the rent rebate in accordance with the period or degree of leasehold or eligibility of the claimant in determining the amount of rebate for which the claimant is eligible, including consideration of all of the following:	84 85 86 87 88
(1) The residential rental property is rented and occupied for only a portion of a year or is rented in part by a person who does not meet the qualifications for a claimant, exclusive of any interest leased by a claimant's spouse.	89 90 91 92
(2) The claimant is a widow or widower who remarries.	93
(3) The claimant is a formerly permanently disabled person who is no longer disabled.	94 95
(F) A claimant who receives public housing assistance shall not be eligible for a rent rebate for those months in which the claimant receives the public housing assistance.	96 97 98
<b>Section 3.</b> (A) Except as provided in division (B) of this section, a claim for a rent rebate shall be filed with the	99 100

Department of Commerce on or before the thirtieth day of June of 101  
the year next succeeding the end of the calendar year in which 102  
rent was due and payable. 103

(B) A claim filed after the thirtieth of June deadline 104  
until the thirty-first of December of such calendar year shall 105  
be accepted by the Department as long as funds are available to 106  
pay the benefits to the late filing claimant. 107

(C) (1) Only one claimant from a residential rental 108  
property each year shall be entitled to the rent rebate. 109

(2) If two or more persons are able to meet the 110  
qualifications for a claimant, they may determine who the 111  
claimant shall be. If they are unable to agree, the Department 112  
shall determine to whom the rent rebate is to be paid. 113

(D) Each claim shall include all of the following: 114

(1) Reasonable proof of household income; 115

(2) The size and nature of the property claimed as the 116  
residential rental property; 117

(3) Proof that rent has been paid in connection with the 118  
occupancy of the residential rental property, however it shall 119  
not be necessary that rent was paid directly by the claimant; 120

(4) If the claimant is a widow or widower, a declaration 121  
of such status in such manner as prescribed by the Department; 122

(5) If the claimant's eligibility is based on the 123  
claimant's permanent disability, then the claimant must provide 124  
proof of either of the following: 125

(a) That the claimant is eligible to receive disability 126  
benefits under the "Social Security Act," 42 U.S.C 301 et seq. 127

(b) Written documentation by a physician designated by the 128  
Department indicating that the physician has performed an 129  
examination and the claimant has a permanent disability as 130  
determined by using the same standards used by the federal 131  
social security administration. 132

(6) Unless the claimant claims to be a permanently 133  
disabled person, the first claim filed shall include proof that 134  
the claimant or the claimant's spouse was at least sixty-five 135  
years of age, or at least fifty years of age in the case of a 136  
widow or widower during the calendar year in which the rent was 137  
due and payable. 138

**Section 4.** The approved claims shall be paid from the rent 139  
rebate assistance fund hereby created in the state treasury. 140  
Moneys credited to the fund shall be expended by the Department 141  
of Commerce exclusively for the purpose of administering this 142  
act. If claims approved by the Department exceed the amount of 143  
moneys available in the rent rebate assistance fund for a 144  
particular calendar year, then each claimant's rebate for that 145  
calendar year shall be reduced by a pro rata amount, so that the 146  
total rebate amount does not exceed the amount of the fund for 147  
that calendar year. 148

**Section 5.** (A) No person shall knowingly file a fraudulent 149  
claim under this act. 150

(B) In any case in which a claim is excessive and was 151  
filed fraudulently, the claim shall be disallowed in full, and a 152  
penalty of twenty-five per cent of the amount claimed shall be 153  
imposed. The Department of Commerce may charge interest on the 154  
disallowed amount and the penalty from the date of the claim 155  
until repayment to the Department is made. 156

**Section 6.** The Department of Commerce shall adopt rules to 157  
implement and administer this act, including both of the 158  
following: 159

(A) A method in which a person who files a claim, but 160  
whose claim is denied, or otherwise adversely affected by the 161  
Department may file with the Department a petition for 162  
redetermination within ninety days after the date the person is 163  
notified of the denial or the otherwise adversely affected 164  
claim. 165

(B) A procedure in which the Department will designate a 166  
physician for purposes of division (D) (5) of Section 3 of this 167  
act. 168

**Section 7.** All items in this act are hereby appropriated 169  
as designated out of any moneys in the state treasury to the 170  
credit of the designated fund. For all operating appropriations 171  
made in this act, those in the first column are for fiscal year 172  
2022 and those in the second column are for fiscal year 2023. 173  
The operating appropriations made in this act are in addition to 174  
any other operating appropriations made for the FY 2022-FY 2023 175  
biennium. 176

**Section 8.** 177

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A COM DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

B Dedicated Purpose Fund Group

C	5SW0	800655	Rent Rebate Program	\$0	\$100,000,000
D	TOTAL Dedicated Purpose Fund Group			\$0	\$100,000,000
E	TOTAL ALL BUDGET FUND GROUPS			\$0	\$100,000,000

RENT REBATE PROGRAM 179

The foregoing appropriation item 800655, Rent Rebate 180  
Program, shall be used by the Department of Commerce to issue 181  
rent rebates in accordance with Sections 1 to 6 of this act. 182

GENERAL REVENUE FUND TRANSFER TO RENT REBATE ASSISTANCE 183  
FUND 184

On July 1, 2022, or as soon as possible thereafter, the 185  
Director of Budget and Management shall transfer up to 186  
\$50,000,000 cash from the General Revenue Fund to the Rent 187  
Rebate Assistance Fund (Fund 5SW0), which is hereby created in 188  
the state treasury. 189

UNCLAIMED FUND REMITTANCE 190

Notwithstanding division (A) of section 169.05 of the 191  
Revised Code, on July 1, 2022, or as soon as possible 192  
thereafter, the Director of Budget and Management shall request 193  
the Director of Commerce to remit for deposit into the Rent 194  
Rebate Assistance Fund (Fund 5SW0) up to \$50,000,000 of 195  
unclaimed funds that have been reported by holders of unclaimed 196  
funds under section 169.05 of the Revised Code, irrespective of 197  
the allocation of the unclaimed funds under that section. The 198  
Director of Commerce shall remit the funds at the time requested 199  
by the Director of Budget and Management. 200

**Section 9.** Within the limits set forth in this act, the 201



Director of Budget and Management shall establish accounts	202
indicating the source and amount of funds for each appropriation	203
made in this act, and shall determine the form and manner in	204
which appropriation accounts shall be maintained. Expenditures	205
from operating appropriations contained in this act shall be	206
accounted for as though made in H.B. 110 of the 134th General	207
Assembly. The operating appropriations made in this act are	208
subject to all provisions of H.B. 110 of the 134th General	209
Assembly that are generally applicable to such appropriations.	210