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# OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

Office of Research  
and Drafting

Legislative Budget  
Office

**H.B. 290  
(with AM1636)  
136<sup>th</sup> General Assembly**

## **Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement**

[Click here for H.B. 290's Bill Analysis](#)

**Version:** In House Natural Resources

**Primary Sponsor:** Rep. Young

**Local Impact Statement Procedure Required:** No

Robert Meeker, Senior Budget Analyst, and other LBO staff

### **Highlights**

- The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA), Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR), and Ohio Air National Guard (OANG) will experience an increase in expenses to investigate reports of solar radiation modification, cloud seeding, or sunlight reflection methods, as well as one-time and ongoing expenses to develop rules, and for Ohio EPA and ODNR to issue cease and desist orders.
- The bill's weather modification prohibitions are unlikely to have a discernible fiscal effect on the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction or local criminal justice systems.

### **Detailed Analysis**

The bill: (1) prohibits any person from engaging in solar radiation modification (SRM), cloud seeding, or sunlight reflection methods in Ohio, including through the use of an aircraft, balloon, drone, space-based platform, or interoperable ground-based facility, and (2) requires the Director of the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA) or the Director of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) to issue a cease and desist order to a person who is conducting or attempting to conduct one of the bill's prohibited activities following an investigation by Ohio EPA, ODNR, or the Ohio Air National Guard (OANG). A violation of the bill's prohibited activities is a third degree felony and the court is required to impose a mandatory 36-month prison term and a fine of not less than \$500,000.

To ensure compliance, the bill requires Ohio EPA, in consultation with ODNR and OANG, to adopt rules to implement and enforce the bill's prohibition against a person or entity engaging in solar radiation modification, cloud seeding, or sunlight reflection methods; allows Ohio EPA, ODNR, and OANG to share data, personnel, and technical equipment with each other and to

conduct joint inspections and monitoring activities with each other; and allows Ohio EPA and ODNR to utilize the logistical and administrative support of OANG.

Ohio EPA, ODNR, and OANG will experience an increase in expenses to investigate reports of solar radiation modification, cloud seeding, or sunlight reflection methods, as well as one-time and ongoing expenses to develop rules, and for Ohio EPA and ODNR to issue cease and desist orders. The magnitude of any increase for each agency will be dependent upon the number of reports of violations of the bill's prohibitions as well as the number and method of investigations completed by each agency. Regarding the costs to OANG, representatives indicate that personnel and equipment costs would be borne solely by state-supported funds and no federally funded or supported equipment could be utilized for the bill's purposes. If those resources are used, certain reimbursement payments to federal funding sources may be necessary.

The bill is not expected to have a discernible impact on the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction or local criminal justice systems as charges, criminal trials, and sanctioning, including the bill's mandatory prison term, resulting from violations of the bill's prohibitions, are expected to be relatively rare.