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OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

Office of Research
and Drafting

Legislative Budget
Office

H.B. 343
136th General Assembly

Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

[Click here for H.B. 343's Bill Analysis](#)

Version: As Introduced

Primary Sponsor: Rep. Lorenz

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: No

Maggie West, Senior Budget Analyst

Highlights

- The Department of Youth Services (DYS) estimates the bill will result in up to 200 or more youth being committed to their custody. Such a population increase would exceed existing bed space at DYS facilities and additional staff would likely be needed.
- To the extent that certain qualifying youth are committed to the care and custody of DYS rather than sanctioned locally, Reasoned and Equitable Community and Local Alternatives to the Incarceration of Minors (RECLAIM) funding allotments for local juvenile courts would likely decrease.
- There may be a minimal increase in local sanctioning costs related to the bill's mandatory dispositions for certain youth adjudicated under the bill.

Detailed Analysis

The bill requires mandatory dispositions for certain youth adjudicated delinquent for committing acts that would be a felony violation of theft or vandalism if committed by an adult, including, for youth with two or more prior adjudications, a commitment to the Department of Youth Services (DYS) for an indefinite term ranging from nine months to seven years, but not to exceed a child's attainment of 21 years of age. For youth with one prior adjudication, the bill requires, rather than permits, a juvenile court to make an order of disposition as authorized under current law (please see the [LSC bill analysis](#) for a complete list of possible disposition orders).

Department of Youth Services

According to the DYS FY 2024 report, around 16% of total admissions (61 of 381) that year were for property crimes. The practical effect of the bill is likely to be an increase in the number

of commitments to DYS for those offenses. It is also possible that some youth committed to DYS for a property crime may serve longer sentences under the bill than they otherwise would have under current law. The total number of youth likely to be adjudicated for offenses included in the bill is indeterminate. However, DYS staff estimates that the bill could add up to 200 or more youth to its total population, which as of July 2025, totaled 585 youth. Existing staff and bed space at DYS facilities would not be sufficient to accommodate a population increase of that magnitude.

RECLAIM Ohio

If more youth are committed to DYS care and custody as a result of the bill, the RECLAIM (Reasoned and Equitable Community and Local Alternatives to the Incarceration of Minors) Ohio allocation for impacted juvenile courts would be reduced.¹ The RECLAIM County Subsidy provides as much as half of a juvenile court's annual budget and is allocated to counties through a formula based upon each county's proportion of statewide felony delinquent adjudications and DYS and community corrections facility bed day usage during the prior year. The impact of any reduction in RECLAIM allocation would vary by court based on the number of youth committed to DYS and the number of bed days used by each. It should be noted that RECLAIM allocations are based on prior year bed day usage so there would be a one-year delay before any impact would be realized.

Juvenile courts

By requiring rather than permitting a juvenile court to make an order of disposition as authorized under current law, the bill may minimally increase the local sanctioning costs for certain youth. The magnitude of increase for any given county will depend on the number of qualifying adjudications for theft or vandalism and subsequent sanctions imposed by the juvenile court. For instance, it is possible that the disposition ordered by the court for a youth adjudicated under the bill could be more severe, longer in duration, and more costly than what may have otherwise been ordered under current law. Conversely, it is possible that a court-ordered disposition under the bill would have been ordered anyway under current law at the court's discretion. Given that a youth would have to have a prior adjudication for what would be considered a felony vandalism or theft offense if committed by an adult for the bill's mandatory disposition to apply, it is possible that the latter could apply to at least some of the youth impacted by the bill.

Based on feedback received from the Ohio Judicial Conference, cases in which the bill's mandatory dispositions would apply are likely to make up a small portion of any given juvenile court's overall caseload.

¹ RECLAIM Ohio is a funding initiative that encourages juvenile courts to develop or purchase a range of community-based options to meet the needs of juvenile offenders or youth at risk of offending as an alternative to incarceration.