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OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

Office of Research
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Legislative Budget
Office

H.B. 676
136th General Assembly

Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

[Click here for H.B. 676's Bill Analysis](#)

Version: As Introduced

Primary Sponsor: Reps D. Thomas and Creech

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: No

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Highlights

- The bill will increase administrative costs for county auditors because it requires them to administer a registration framework for wolfdog hybrids in addition to existing dog licensing. Any new costs would be at least partially offset through the bill's \$100 annual registration fee assessed to owners of wolfdog hybrids.
- Enforcement and operational costs for county dog wardens will increase due to expanded duties connected to registration verification, confinement oversight, insurance compliance, and the handling or disposition of animals involved in violations. The overall cost impact will vary based on how many wolfdog hybrids are present within a county.
- The bill may increase county expenditures under its authorization for boards of county commissioners to abate, control, or remove animals deemed a nuisance. Under the bill, counties must initially incur the costs of an abatement action and may later seek to recover those costs through a lien on the affected property, although successful recovery is not guaranteed.
- The bill may create minimal revenue gains and enforcement activity under new criminal penalties for violations of its provisions. Under the bill, any associated fine revenue or adjudication cost is likely to be negligible.

Detailed Analysis

Wolfdog hybrid registration

The bill will increase administrative costs for county auditors under provisions requiring them to establish and manage a distinct wolfdog hybrid registration system in addition to existing dog licensing duties. Under the bill, auditors must maintain a separate set of records, process

annual registrations, and track address change notifications for wolfdog hybrid owners, resulting in a modest expansion of administrative workload. The bill's \$100 annual registration fee, assessed to wolfdog hybrid owners, may offset some or all of these new costs depending on the number of wolfdog hybrids registered in the county.

Transfer, confinement, and insurance requirements

The bill creates a comprehensive regulatory structure governing the ownership, transfer, confinement, and insurance requirements applicable to wolfdog hybrids that will increase enforcement costs for county dog wardens. Under the bill, dog wardens will be responsible for monitoring compliance with confinement standards, responding to reports involving loose or unconfined wolfdog hybrids, verifying insurance coverage upon request, and managing seized animals pending disposition. The extent of these costs will depend on the number of hybrid wolfdogs and the frequency of incidents requiring enforcement action.

Penalties

The bill may result in a negligible increase in local fine revenue and adjudication costs due to new criminal penalties for violations of its provisions, ranging from minor misdemeanors to fourth degree felonies. Under the bill, courts, prosecutors, and local law enforcement agencies may see a slight increase in case volume; however, the number of affected cases is likely to be small, and the overall fiscal effect is likely to be minimal.

Nuisance abatement

The bill may increase county expenditures because it authorizes boards of county commissioners to abate, control, or remove animals determined to be a nuisance, with all associated costs initially paid from the county general fund. Under the bill, counties may later recover these costs by placing a lien on the property where the animals were kept, but cost recovery is not assured and may vary by case. As a result, counties could incur net expenses in situations where abatement is necessary but reimbursement does not occur.