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H.B. 697
136th General Assembly

Bill Analysis

Version: As Introduced

Primary Sponsor: Rep. Hiner

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SUMMARY

- Declares the right of a public or nonpublic school to broadcast middle or high school post-season or playoff interscholastic athletic contests or competitions in which the school's athletic team is participating.
- Prohibits an organization that regulates interscholastic conferences or events from entering into an exclusive broadcast agreement that prohibits a school or a local broadcaster from broadcasting them.

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Broadcast of school post-season or playoff competitions

The bill addresses the broadcast of middle or high school post-season or playoff interscholastic athletic contests or competitions by a local broadcaster or a public or nonpublic school that is subject to the rules of an organization that regulates interscholastic conferences or events (such as the Ohio High School Athletic Association). Specifically, with regard to such contests or competitions, it:

1. Declares that each school has a right to broadcast them if they are in Ohio and the school's athletic team is participating;
2. Prohibits an organization that regulates interscholastic conferences or events in Ohio from entering into an exclusive broadcast agreement that prohibits a local broadcaster or participating school from broadcasting them; and
3. Clarifies that, to broadcast them, a local broadcaster must either:
 - a. Have provided broadcast services for any activity of a school in the local area; or
 - b. Enter a formal agreement with the school to broadcast them.

The bill expressly does not void or affect a contract entered into prior to the bill's effective date, though it does apply to the renewal of a contract after that date.

Under the bill:

- A “broadcast” is the live or recorded audio or video transmission over airwaves, streaming, or other transmission of an athletic activity, play-by-play, or other account of such activity via radio, television, internet, or other technologies.
- A “local broadcaster” is either (1) an organization with a primary service radio or television Federal Communications Commission license that is located in Ohio or (2) school-sponsored organizations that produce student-organized broadcasts, including educational courses or programs offered by the school.
- An “organization” is an individual, public or private corporation, partnership, limited liability company, association, joint venture, or any other legal or commercial entity.¹

HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	02-12-26

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¹ R.C. 3313.5321, 3314.03(A)(11)(d), 3326.11, and 3328.24.