

**As Introduced**

**136th General Assembly  
Regular Session  
2025-2026**

**H. B. No. 751**

**Representatives Mathews, A., Ritter**

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To amend sections 109.25, 1715.51, and 5813.06 and 1  
to enact sections 1715.551, 1715.552, 1715.553, 2  
1715.554, 1715.555, 1715.556, 1715.557, 3  
1715.558, and 1715.559 of the Revised Code to 4  
establish the scope and procedures for a civil 5  
action when an institution violates a 6  
restriction in an endowment agreement. 7

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

**Section 1.** That sections 109.25, 1715.51, and 5813.06 be 8  
amended and sections 1715.551, 1715.552, 1715.553, 1715.554, 9  
1715.555, 1715.556, 1715.557, 1715.558, and 1715.559 of the 10  
Revised Code be enacted to read as follows: 11

**Sec. 109.25.** The attorney general is a necessary party to 12  
and shall be served with process or with summons by registered 13  
mail in all judicial proceedings, the object of which is to: 14

(A) Terminate a charitable trust or distribute assets; 15

(B) Depart from the objects or purposes of a charitable 16  
trust as the same are set forth in the instrument creating the 17  
trust, including any proceeding for the application of the 18  
doctrine of cy pres or deviation; 19

(C) Construe the provisions of an instrument with respect 20

to a charitable trust; 21

(D) Determine the validity of a will having provisions for 22  
a charitable trust; 23

(E) Enforce the express terms of an endowment agreement 24  
under sections 1715.551 to 1715.559 of the Revised Code. 25

A judgment rendered in such proceedings without service of 26  
process or summons upon the attorney general is void, 27  
unenforceable, and shall be set aside upon the attorney 28  
general's motion seeking such relief. The attorney general shall 29  
intervene in any judicial proceeding affecting a charitable 30  
trust when requested to do so by the court having jurisdiction 31  
of the proceeding, and may intervene in any judicial proceeding 32  
affecting a charitable trust when ~~he~~ the attorney general 33  
determines that the public interest should be protected in such 34  
proceeding. 35

**Sec. 1715.51.** As used in sections 1715.51 to 1715.59 of 36  
the Revised Code: 37

(A) "Benefactor" means each person signing an endowment 38  
agreement who committed in the agreement to transfer property to 39  
an institution with the institution's consent. 40

(B) (1) "Benefactor representative" means either: 41

(a) A person designated in an endowment agreement, whether 42  
or not born or existing at the time of such designation, to act 43  
in place of the benefactor for the purpose of resolving disputes 44  
about the agreement, including the agreement's validity, 45  
interpretation, performance, and enforcement, and any action 46  
that the agreement contemplates; 47

(b) If no person is designated in the endowment agreement, 48

as described in division (B) (1) (a) of this section, the 49  
administrator or executor of a benefactor's estate. 50

(2) "Benefactor representative" does not mean the 51  
institution receiving or administering property under an 52  
endowment agreement or any person designated by such institution 53  
for any purpose. 54

(C) "Charitable purpose" means any purpose the achievement 55  
of which is beneficial to the community, including the relief of 56  
poverty, the advancement of education or religion, the promotion 57  
of health, and the promotion of a governmental purpose. 58

~~(B)~~ (D) "Institution" means any of the following: 59

(1) A person, other than an individual, organized and 60  
operated exclusively for charitable purposes; 61

(2) A governmental organization to the extent that it 62  
holds funds exclusively for a charitable purpose; 63

(3) A trust that had both charitable and noncharitable 64  
interests and the noncharitable interests have terminated. 65

~~(C)~~ (E) "Institutional fund" means a fund that is held by 66  
an institution exclusively for charitable purposes. 67

"Institutional fund" does not include any of the following: 68

(1) ~~Program-related~~ Program-related assets; 69

(2) A fund held for an institution by a trustee that is 70  
not an institution; 71

(3) A fund in which a beneficiary that is not an 72  
institution has an interest other than an interest that may 73  
arise upon a violation of or the failure of the purposes of the 74  
fund. 75

~~(D)~~(F) "Endowment agreement" means a gift instrument 76  
signed by a benefactor and by a state institution of higher 77  
education or another institution whose corporate purpose is to 78  
benefit an identified state institution of higher education and 79  
receives, holds, or administers charitable transfers of property 80  
for such state institution of higher education; and that 81  
contains both of the following obligations: 82

(1) The benefactor commits to transfer property to a state 83  
institution of higher education or to another institution to 84  
receive, hold, or administer the property for the use or benefit 85  
of a state institution of higher education with the consent of 86  
such state institution of higher education. 87

(2) An institution signing the instrument commits that the 88  
institution or a state institution of higher education will 89  
receive, hold, or administer the transferred property as an 90  
endowment fund for the use or benefit of a state institution of 91  
higher education subject to any restrictions on management, 92  
investment, spending, or purpose expressed in the instrument. 93

(G) "Endowment fund" means an institutional fund or any 94  
part thereof that, under the terms of a gift instrument, is not 95  
wholly expendable by the institution on a current basis. 96  
"Endowment fund" does not include assets that an institution 97  
designates as an endowment fund for its own use. 98

~~(E)~~(H) "Gift instrument" means a record or records, 99  
including an institutional solicitation, under which property is 100  
granted to, transferred to, or held by an institution as an 101  
institutional fund. 102

~~(F)~~(I) "Person" means an individual, corporation, business 103  
trust, estate, trust, partnership, limited liability company, 104

association, joint venture, public corporation, governmental 105  
organization, or any other legal or commercial entity. 106

~~(G)~~(J) "~~Program related~~ Program-related asset" means an 107  
asset held by an institution primarily to accomplish a 108  
charitable purpose of the institution and not primarily for 109  
investment. 110

~~(H)~~(K) "Record" means information that is inscribed on a 111  
tangible medium or that is stored in an electronic or other 112  
medium and is retrievable in perceivable form. 113

(L) "State institution of higher education" has the same 114  
meaning as in section 3345.011 of the Revised Code and is an 115  
"institution" within the meaning of this chapter. 116

**Sec. 1715.551.** If an institution violates a restriction 117  
contained in an endowment agreement on the management, 118  
investment, spending, or purpose of the endowment fund, a 119  
benefactor or benefactor representative may notify the 120  
charitable law section of the office of the attorney general in 121  
writing of the violation. 122

**Sec. 1715.552.** The attorney general may enforce the 123  
interests of the beneficiaries of an endowment agreement by 124  
filing a complaint for breach or to obtain a declaratory 125  
judgment of rights and duties expressed in the agreement and as 126  
to all of the actions it contemplates, including the 127  
interpretation, performance, and enforcement of the agreement 128  
and determination of its validity. 129

**Sec. 1715.553.** (A) If, within one hundred eighty days 130  
after receiving the notice under section 1715.551 of the Revised 131  
Code, the attorney general has not obtained full compliance with 132  
the restriction and restitution to the endowment fund of 133

<u>property approximately equal to any value lost due to the</u>	134
<u>violated restriction, a benefactor or benefactor representative</u>	135
<u>may file a complaint for either or both of the following:</u>	136
<u>(1) Breach of the endowment agreement;</u>	137
<u>(2) To obtain a declaratory judgment of rights and duties</u>	138
<u>expressed in the agreement as to all of the actions it</u>	139
<u>contemplates, including the interpretation, performance, and</u>	140
<u>enforcement of the agreement and determination of its validity.</u>	141
<u>(B) Each of the following applies to the complaint:</u>	142
<u>(1) It may be filed regardless of whether the agreement</u>	143
<u>expressly reserves a right to sue or enforce.</u>	144
<u>(2) The filing of a complaint by the attorney general</u>	145
<u>under section 1715.552 of the Revised Code is not a requirement</u>	146
<u>for filing a complaint under this section.</u>	147
<u>(3) It shall not seek a judgment awarding to the plaintiff</u>	148
<u>damages, court costs, attorney's fees, or any other award of</u>	149
<u>money or other property.</u>	150
<u>(4) It shall seek only one or both of the following:</u>	151
<u>(a) Declaratory relief;</u>	152
<u>(b) Equitable relief consistent with the charitable</u>	153
<u>purposes expressed in the endowment agreement and consistent</u>	154
<u>with the charitable purposes of the institution administering</u>	155
<u>the endowment fund under the endowment agreement and the state</u>	156
<u>institution of higher education receiving the use or benefit of</u>	157
<u>the endowment fund.</u>	158
<u><b>Sec. 1715.554.</b> An institution that is a party to an</u>	159
<u>endowment agreement, or the state institution of higher</u>	160

education receiving the use or benefit of the endowment fund 161  
established through an endowment agreement, may obtain a 162  
declaratory judgment of rights and duties expressed in an 163  
endowment agreement and as to all of the actions it 164  
contemplates, including the interpretation, performance, and 165  
enforcement of the agreement and determination of the 166  
agreement's validity. The institution shall seek such 167  
declaration in response to any complaint brought under sections 168  
1715.551 to 1715.559 of the Revised Code. 169

**Sec. 1715.555.** Every complaint authorized by sections 170  
1715.551 to 1715.559 of the Revised Code shall be filed in a 171  
court of competent general jurisdiction in the county where the 172  
state institution of higher education receiving the use or 173  
benefit of the endowment fund has its principal office. Every 174  
such complaint shall: 175

(A) Name the attorney general as a party; 176

(B) Name as parties each institution that signed the 177  
endowment agreement or its successor, the state institution of 178  
higher education receiving the use or benefit of the endowment 179  
fund, and any institution that currently holds or administers 180  
property subject to the agreement; 181

(C) Name as parties each benefactor and benefactor 182  
representative. 183

**Sec. 1715.556.** The failure to join as a party a benefactor 184  
or benefactor representative is not jurisdictional. The court, 185  
however, shall afford a benefactor or benefactor representative 186  
an opportunity to be heard or to intervene if sought within a 187  
reasonable time before the court renders final judgment. 188

**Sec. 1715.557.** The interest of a benefactor and the 189

interest represented by a benefactor representative shall not be 190  
presumed to be identical with the interest of the attorney 191  
general or a state institution of higher education or an 192  
institution administering an endowment fund under an endowment 193  
agreement. 194

**Sec. 1715.558.** (A) Except as allowed by division (B) of 195  
this section, a benefactor or benefactor representative shall 196  
not file a complaint authorized by sections 1715.551 to 1715.559 197  
of the Revised Code based on a breach of an endowment agreement 198  
if the person filing the complaint discovered the breach more 199  
than six years before filing the complaint. 200

(B) If, during the sixth year after discovery of the 201  
breach of an endowment agreement, a benefactor or benefactor 202  
representative notifies the charitable law section of the office 203  
of the attorney general in writing of the breach of an endowment 204  
agreement as authorized by sections 1715.551 to 1715.559 of the 205  
Revised Code, the period within which such benefactor or 206  
benefactor representative must file a complaint authorized by 207  
sections 1715.551 to 1715.559 of the Revised Code is extended 208  
automatically by two hundred ten days. 209

**Sec. 1715.559.** Sections 1715.551 to 1715.559 of the 210  
Revised Code apply only to the following: 211

(A) Endowment funds established on and after the effective 212  
date of this section; 213

(B) Endowment funds established before the effective date 214  
of this section, but only with respect to breaches of such 215  
endowment agreements if those breaches occur on or after the 216  
effective date of this section. 217

**Sec. 5813.06.** (A) Nothing in sections 5813.01 to 5813.05 218

of the Revised Code affects the construction or interpretation 219  
of sections 1715.51 to 1715.59 of the Revised Code relating to 220  
the uniform prudent management of institutional funds act. 221  
Specifically, neither the percentage set forth in division (B) 222  
of section 5813.02 of the Revised Code nor the amount actually 223  
requested by a governing board pursuant to that section shall be 224  
construed or interpreted to limit or expand what is a prudent 225  
amount that can be expended by a governing board of an 226  
institution under sections 1715.51 to 1715.59 of the Revised 227  
Code. 228

(B) If an institutional trust fund is also an 229  
institutional fund as defined in division ~~(C)~~(E) of section 230  
1715.51 of the Revised Code with the result that sections 231  
1715.51 to 1715.59 of the Revised Code also are applicable to 232  
the institutional trust fund, then sections 1715.51 to 1715.59 233  
of the Revised Code apply to the institutional trust fund, and 234  
sections 5813.01 to 5813.07 of the Revised Code do not apply to 235  
the institutional trust fund. 236

**Section 2.** That existing sections 109.25, 1715.51, and 237  
5813.06 of the Revised Code are hereby repealed. 238