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OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

Office of Research
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Legislative Budget
Office

S.B. 243
136th General Assembly

Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

[Click here for S.B. 243's Bill Analysis](#)

Version: As Introduced

Primary Sponsors: Sens. Weinstein and DeMora

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: No

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Highlights

- The Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) may incur additional one-time costs to update existing software systems and to adopt policies and procedures and create forms in conjunction with the Director of Commerce. The software system update costs have the potential to be significant.
- Governmentally operated deputy registrar (as well as contracted) locations will experience an increase in workload which will need to be absorbed utilizing existing staff and resources.

Detailed Analysis

The bill requires the Registrar of Motor Vehicles or a deputy registrar to ask each person conducting an in-person transaction at the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) or at a deputy registrar office if the person wants the Registrar or deputy registrar to check if the person has unclaimed funds. If a person has unclaimed funds, the bill requires the Registrar or a deputy registrar to assist the person if they want assistance filing an unclaimed funds claim.

Bureau of Motor Vehicles

According to the BMV, in order to comply with the bill's requirements, existing software systems will need to be updated to allow deputy registrars to identify unclaimed funds via the Department of Commerce and, if unclaimed funds are found, to allow a deputy registrar to submit a claim for those funds. It should be noted that the state of Ohio BMV does not perform in-person transactions (these are handled instead by deputy registrars) however, the BMV does provide all equipment used by the deputy registrars and manages the software on that equipment.

The exact magnitude of these costs is uncertain but has the potential to be significant according to the BMV. The BMV may also incur minimal one-time administrative costs related to the adoption of necessary policies and procedures, and the creation of forms in conjunction with the Director of Commerce.

Deputy registrars

Most deputy registrars are independent contractors however, the BMV has awarded contracts to certain county auditors and clerks of courts of common pleas to provide deputy registrar services.¹ According to the BMV, deputy registrar locations statewide process a total of approximately 13 million in-person transactions annually. This means that under the bill, deputy registrars, both independent and governmentally operated, could be required to provide unclaimed fund assistance for up to approximately 13 million people annually. To the extent that such assistance is required, all deputy registrars may experience an increase in the amount of time that it takes to process certain transactions, especially if unclaimed funds are discovered and the person wants assistance submitting a claim for those funds. Deputy registrars receive \$8.00 per transaction, however it is uncertain if this fee will cover the additional cost to perform these duties. Additionally, if fewer transactions are processed during a typical day as a result of adding additional processing time to each transaction, this could mean a corresponding decrease in the amount of service fee revenue received. The magnitude of such a decrease would depend on the extent to which a given deputy registrar location is able to absorb any increase in workload utilizing existing staff and resources. For governmentally operated deputy registrar locations, any decrease in processed transactions would mean a corresponding loss of service fee revenue for the county in which the auditor or court is located.

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¹ As of August 13, 2025, the Department of Public Safety reported a total of 28 deputy registrar locations in 22 counties that were served by a county auditor or a clerk of a court of common pleas. Those counties include Butler, Champaign, Erie, Fayette, Franklin, Gallia, Guernsey, Harrison, Holmes, Huron, Jackson, Jefferson, Lorain, Mahoning, Meigs, Montgomery, Noble, Perry, Summit, Trumbull, Vinton, and Wyandot.