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# OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

Office of Research  
and Drafting

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Office

H.B. 271  
135<sup>th</sup> General Assembly

## Bill Analysis

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**Version:** As Reported by House State and Local Government

**Primary Sponsors:** Reps. Mathews and Peterson

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### SUMMARY

- Specifies that, beginning with the general election on November 5, 2024, a state question or issue appearing at the top of the ballot must be designated with an Arabic numeral 1 and any state question or issue placed below that must be consecutively numbered.
- Specifies that, for elections occurring after November 5, 2024, a state question or issue appearing at the top of the ballot must be designated by the Arabic numeral that is consecutive to the Arabic numeral of the last state question or issue that appeared on the ballot at the immediately preceding election at which a question or issue appeared.
- Requires, once a state question or issue appears on the ballot designated with the Arabic numeral 500, that the state question or issue that appears at the top of the ballot at the immediately following election be designated with the Arabic numeral 1.

### DETAILED ANALYSIS

#### Numbering of state questions or issues on a ballot

Questions and issues that appear on a ballot are grouped together, with state questions and issues appearing at the top of the ballot and local questions and issues following after in a rotating order prescribed by law. Generally, those questions and issues may be consecutively numbered.

Under the bill, beginning with the general election on November 5, 2024, a state question or issue appearing at the top of the ballot must be designated with an Arabic numeral 1 and any state question or issue placed below that must be consecutively numbered. For elections that occur after November 5, 2024, a state question or issue appearing at the top of the ballot must be designated by the Arabic numeral that is consecutive to the Arabic numeral of the last state question or issue that appeared on the ballot at the immediately preceding election at which a state question or issue appeared on the ballot. Any state question or issue

placed below must be consecutively numbered. For example, if only one state question or issue appears on the ballot at the November 5, 2024, general election, it will be “Issue 1.” The state question or issue that appears at the top of the ballot at the next election will be “Issue 2,” and no state issue or question will ever have a repeating number from a previous election. Under continuing law, the numeral designation must be placed below the heavy top horizontal line enclosing a question or issue and to the left of the brief title.

Additionally, once a state question or issue appears on the ballot designated with the Arabic numeral 500, the state question or issue that appears at the top of the ballot at the immediately following election must be designated with the Arabic numeral 1.

Under current law, the state question or issue appearing at the top of the ballot for any election must always be designated with an Arabic numeral 1 and those placed below that must be consecutively numbered. For example, if only one state question or issue appears on the ballot at the November 5, 2024, general election, it will be “Issue 1.” The numbering for the state question or issue that appears at the top of the ballot at the next election will start over and will be “Issue 1.” Continuing law permits that numbering process to continue for questions and issues other than state questions and issues.<sup>1</sup>

## HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	09-18-23
Reported, H. State & Local Gov't	04-24-24

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<sup>1</sup> R.C. 3505.06.