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OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

Office of Research
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Legislative Budget
Office

H.B. 606
(1_135_1966-9)
135th General Assembly

Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

[Click here for H.B. 606's Bill Analysis](#)

Version: In House Finance

Primary Sponsors: Reps. Pizzulli and Jarrells

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: No

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Highlights

- The bill appropriates a total of \$4 million in FY 2025 from the GRF to support three new grant programs that will be distributed to institutions of higher education or certain higher education student organizations on those campuses to enhance security measures and increase student safety and to support intergroup and interfaith outreach and cultural competency between institutionally sanctioned student organizations.
- The Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) will incur annual expenditures likely in the hundreds of thousands of dollars range to administer the three grant programs and to establish a committee on combating antisemitism, Islamophobia, and other forms of racial, religious, and ethnic harassment, and intimidation. At least some of the additional costs related to administering the grant programs may be offset by a portion of the bill's appropriations.
- State institutions of higher education may incur costs ranging from tens of thousands to hundreds of thousands of dollars to adopt and enforce a policy on racial, religious, and ethnic harassment, and intimidation at the institution, including training faculty and staff on how to respond to hate incidents or incidents of harassment, along with other requirements in the bill.
- Any state agency with 50 or more employees that does not have a policy for the prevention of antisemitism will incur administrative costs to adopt one, as required by the bill.

Detailed Analysis

Campus grant programs

The bill appropriates a total of \$4 million from the GRF in FY 2025 to support the following programs:

- **Campus Security Support Program.** The bill appropriates \$2 million in FY 2025 from GRF line item 235475, Campus Security Support Program, for the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) to distribute to institutionally sanctioned student organizations affiliated with communities that are at risk for increased threats of violent crime, terror attacks, hate crimes, or harassment to enhance security measures and increase student safety at institutions of higher education throughout the state. The bill specifically permits ODHE to use a portion of the appropriation from line item 235475 to administer the program.
- **Campus Student Safety Grant Program.** The bill creates the Campus Student Safety Grant Program and supports it with an appropriation of \$1 million in FY 2025 from GRF line item 235476, Campus Student Safety Grant Program. ODHE will award grants to institutions of higher education that demonstrate increased threats of violent crime, terror attacks, hate crimes, or harassment toward students and institutionally sanctioned student organizations at the institution to enhance security measures and increase student safety.
- **Campus Community Grant Program.** The bill creates the Campus Community Grant Program and supports it with an appropriation of \$1.0 million in FY 2025 from GRF line item 2354A3, Campus Community Grant Program. ODHE will provide funding to institutionally sanctioned student organizations at institutions of higher education to support intergroup and interfaith outreach and cultural competency between institutionally sanctioned student organizations.

ODHE additional responsibilities

In addition to administering each of the grant programs mentioned above, the bill requires ODHE to establish a committee on combating antisemitism, Islamophobia, and other forms of racial, religious, and ethnic harassment, and intimidation. Under the bill, the committee must develop a model policy, guidance, best practices, and recommendations for further action related to policies on preventing racial, religious, and ethnic harassment, and intimidation that the bill requires for public and private, for-profit institutions. No later than July 1, immediately following the bill's effective date, ODHE must issue a report that includes the model policy, guidance, best practices, and recommendations for further action developed by the committee to the Governor and President and Minority Leader of the Senate, and Speaker and Minority Leader of the House of Representatives.

These new responsibilities will increase the administrative workload of ODHE. According to a spokesperson with ODHE, the agency estimates administrative costs may increase by approximately \$250,000 each year. Most of these costs are related to hiring additional staff to administer the three grant programs. However, at least some of these new administrative costs may be offset by ODHE using portions of the bill's appropriations for that purpose. For the Campus Student Safety and Campus Community grant programs, the bill also requires ODHE to

develop guidelines and procedures for the programs, including an application process, criteria for awards, and a method to determine the distribution of awards.

State institution of higher education additional responsibilities

The bill requires each state institution of higher education to perform a series of new responsibilities, all of which are related to combatting racial, religious, and ethnic harassment and intimidation at the institution. Below is a list of what the bill requires, along with estimated costs for state universities and community colleges as reported by their respective stakeholder groups:

1. Adoption and enforcement of a policy on racial, religious, and ethnic harassment, and intimidation at the institution, including:
 - a. Training for all institution administration, faculty, and staff that provides information on how to respond to hate incidents or incidents of harassment that occur during a class or event held at the institution at the time such an incident occurs. According to the Inter-University Council (IUC) and the Ohio Association of Community Colleges (OACC), this provision constitutes the largest costs for most institutions, ranging from less than \$10,000 to possibly up to \$450,000 per institution. The bill permits this training to be provided online which may mitigate some of these costs for institutions.
 - b. Procedures for accepting, investigating, and resolving (including potential disciplinary action) student complaints and allegations of racial, religious, or ethnic harassment or intimidation against any student, staff, or faculty member. Costs for this provision could range between less than \$2,000 to tens of thousands of dollars per institution depending on the number of allegations made and the staff time to investigate.
2. Creation of a campus task force on combating religious-based hatred, harassment, bullying, or violence. Most estimates from the institutions sampled by IUC and OACC indicate that the cost to create this task force would range from minimal to \$10,000.
3. Collaboration, to the extent possible and as needed, between campus security and police, local law enforcement, the state highway patrol, and student communities to provide security functions for institutionally sanctioned student organizations that face threats of terror attack or hate crimes. According to IUC and OACC, these expenditures may be minimal depending on the duration and scope of needed assistance and the availability of internal resources. Most cost estimates from the institutions for this provision range from minimal to less than \$10,000. Any additional costs to local law enforcement would likely be offset by revenue it would receive from the institution to pay for the additional security.
4. Submission of the Annual Campus Security Report to ODHE that is required for all universities and colleges that participate in federal financial aid programs. There is no cost for institutions related to this provision, as these reports are currently produced by the institutions as required by the federal Clery Act.
5. Publication on each state institution's website of any time, place, or manner restrictions it places on the expressive activities of its students. According to IUC, universities are likely to experience only a minimal increase in costs because this information is already being

publicized. According to OACC, some community colleges will incur an increase in expenditures, perhaps in the several thousands of dollars range.

State agency policy on prevention of antisemitism

The bill requires JobsOhio, any state retirement system, and each state agency employing 50 or more employees to adopt a policy for the prevention of antisemitism. To the extent that a state agency does not have such a policy already in place, its administrative workload will increase to create one. The cost to do so may vary, depending on how the policy is created, but are likely to be minimal.

Synopsis of Fiscal Effect Changes

- The substitute bill (I_135_1966-9) may increase or decrease the As Introduced (previous) bill's administrative workload or costs for the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) by (1) expanding the scope and creating reporting requirements for ODHE related to establishing a committee on combating antisemitism, Islamophobia, and other forms of racial, religious, and ethnic harassment, and intimidation, and (2) eliminating the previous bill's requirement for ODHE to create a uniform reporting system under which an institution must submit a report each year of all allegations of racial, religious, and ethnic bias, harassment, and intimidation received by the institution and any other documented incidents at the institution in that year.
- The substitute bill provides additional funding for ODHE's administrative costs for the bill's Campus Security Support Program by permitting ODHE to use a portion of GRF line item 235475, Campus Security Support Program, to administer the program.
- The substitute bill may reduce the administrative workload or costs to state institutions of higher education by (1) removing the 90-day deadline in the previous bill for each institution to adopt a policy on racial, religious, and ethnic harassment, and intimidation, (2) permitting the training on how to respond to hate incidents or incidents of harassment to be provided online, (3) reducing the scope of security for which the institution is responsible to provide by replacing "student groups, both on and off campus" with "institutionally sanctioned student organizations," (4) eliminating the requirement in the previous version that state institutions adopt a policy for the prevention of antisemitism, and (5) replacing the requirement for institutions to submit an annual report of all allegations of racial, religious, and ethnic bias, harassment, and intimidation received by the institution with the Annual Campus Security Report, which the institutions already produce annually under the federal Clery Act.
- The substitute bill eliminates the administrative workload under the previous bill for agencies with less than 50 employees by excluding them from the requirement that state agencies adopt a policy for the prevention of antisemitism.