



# Ohio Legislative Service Commission

## Bill Analysis

John Rau

### H.B. 305

128th General Assembly  
(As Introduced)

**Reps.** Newcomb, Murray, Weddington, Sears, Hagan, B. Williams, Boyd, Letson, Belcher, Fende, Yuko, Lehner, Domenick, Brown, Harris, Derickson, Stewart, Luckie, Harwood

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## BILL SUMMARY

- Requires the Department of Education to waive fees for taking the GED test for Ohio residents who attain on the official practice GED test at least the score or scores prescribed by the State Board of Education.

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## CONTENT AND OPERATION

### Background

The test of General Educational Development (GED test) is published by the American Council on Education (ACE) as an indicator of a combination of experience, education, and self-study that is considered the equivalent of completing the requirements for a high school diploma for persons who have withdrawn from school.<sup>1</sup> In Ohio, the State Board of Education issues a "high school equivalence diploma" to those who attain a score set by ACE or by the State Board on all five areas of the GED test.<sup>2</sup> There is a fee for applying for and taking the test. Individuals also may enroll in adult education classes and take practice tests to prepare for taking the test.

Under a rule of the State Board, which is still in effect, Ohio residents who attain a prescribed score on the practice tests may apply for a waiver of the application and test fee for the GED test.<sup>3</sup> Also, prior budget legislation required the Department of

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<sup>1</sup> It was created in 1942 for World War II military personnel who left school early to enter military service.

<sup>2</sup> R.C. 3313.611, not in the bill, and Ohio Administrative Code (O.A.C.) 3301-41-01.

<sup>3</sup> O.A.C. 3301-41-01(D).

Education to use certain appropriated funds to provide GED testing "at no cost to applicants, under rules adopted by the State Board of Education."<sup>4</sup> The budget act for the current biennium (Am. Sub. H.B. 1 of the 128th General Assembly), in its final version as enacted, does not include the words "at no cost to applicants."<sup>5</sup> The Department, beginning September 1, 2009, ceased offering waivers of GED testing and application fees.

## **GED test and application fee waivers**

(R.C. 3301.41)

The bill prescribes a permanent statutory waiver of the GED testing and application fees for certain qualified Ohio residents. Under the bill, the Department of Education must waive the application and test fee for each resident applicant who has attained on the official practice GED test at least the score or scores prescribed by rule of the State Board for purposes of the waiver. To qualify, the practice test must be administered through a public or private nonprofit adult education program and the scores on the practice test must be certified to the Department by the director of that program. These provisions are similar to the waiver provisions of the State Board's current rule.

The bill also requires the State Board to prescribe scores to qualify for the waiver by rule adopted under the Administrative Procedure Act.

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## **HISTORY**

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>DATE</b>
Introduced	10-06-09

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<sup>4</sup> Section 269.20.50 of Am. Sub. H.B. 119 of the 127th General Assembly, for example.

<sup>5</sup> Section 265.20.40 of H.B. 1, As Enacted.