
Detailed Fiscal Analysis

H.B. 16 proposes to create the Ohio Historical Society Income Tax Contribution Fund in the state treasury, for the use of the Ohio Historical Society. The bill would permit taxpayers, through a new voluntary income tax "check-off" contribution program, to designate a portion of any refund due under the income tax for deposit to the new fund. A new check-off box will be added to the personal income tax form to allow taxpayers to contribute a portion or all of their income tax refunds. In addition, the fund may accept direct contributions.

The new voluntary income tax "check-off" program will be administered by the Department of Taxation and its administration costs will be reimbursed from a portion of revenue deposited into the fund, similar to current "check-off" programs.¹ The remaining money collected from the new voluntary "check-off" program or any direct contributions must be used by the Historical Society to fund its prescribed functions.

Furthermore, in January of every odd-numbered year, the Historical Society is required to submit a biennial report on the effectiveness of the "check-off" program to the General Assembly. The report must include certain information as specified by the bill.

Fiscal effects

Because the new fund is financed by voluntary gifts, there would be no loss of revenue to the GRF or to the local government funds. The new fund would likely receive some revenue, with the amount of such revenue depending on the number and amount of voluntary contributions. Revenue raised due to the existing designations on Ohio's income tax form suggest that revenue to the Ohio Historical Society Income Tax Contribution Fund would be in the hundreds of thousands of dollars, but because this fund is for a very different purpose, the amounts given may be quite different. Thus, the amount of revenue to the new fund is uncertain.

The bill has no direct fiscal impact to local governments.

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¹ The current refund "check-off" programs are for Ohio's wildlife species and endangered wildlife conservation; for nature preserves, scenic rivers, and endangered species protection; and for injured military personnel and their families.