



Ohio Legislative Service Commission

Nick Thomas

Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

Bill: [H.B. 433 of the 128th G.A.](#)

Date: February 25, 2010

Status: As Introduced

Sponsor: Reps. Ujvagi and Grossman

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: Yes

Contents: Provides certain publicly employed firefighters and emergency medical technicians with additional minimum paid military leave

State Fiscal Highlights

- The bill increases the maximum allowable paid military leave that publicly employed firefighters and emergency medical technicians serving in the reserves or the National Guard may take from 176 to 408 hours.
- The Adjutant General (ADJ), the only state agency that employs firefighters, could incur additional payroll costs for the additional leave benefit. During FY 2009, ADJ employed 35 firefighters that were also members of a military reserve unit. If the benefit for these 35 eligible employees had been in place during FY 2009, the additional payroll cost would have been approximately \$160,000.

Local Fiscal Highlights

- The added military leave would increase payroll costs for political subdivisions that provide firefighter or emergency medical services. The actual cost to each local government would vary according to the number of eligible employees, their wages, and the amount of additional leave taken.
- Current ADJ records indicate that approximately 998 individuals in Ohio would qualify for the additional leave benefit provided in the bill.

Detailed Fiscal Analysis

Overview

The bill requires the state and its political subdivisions to allow publically employed firefighters and emergency medical technicians (EMTs) who work nontraditional schedules to use up to 408 hours of compensated leave for the fulfillment of military reserve requirements. This includes yearly training and monthly weekend duty for members of the Ohio National Guard. Other public employees who work nontraditional shifts, such as members of the highway patrol, would not qualify for the additional leave under the bill, as they work a standard 40-hour week. Overall, the bill would likely result in payroll cost increases for the Adjutant General (ADJ) and political subdivisions that operate fire departments or emergency medical response services. Current ADJ records indicate that there are approximately 998 individuals in state and local government that would qualify for the increased leave benefit.

For employees that qualify, the bill allows for up to 408 hours of military leave compared to the 176 hours provided under current law, a difference of 232 hours. The 176 hours allotted for military reserve leave corresponds to National Guard requirements for employees who work a standard shift of eight hours: two weeks of annual training (80 hours) combined with weekend duty once a month during the year (96 hours). Expanding the leave to 408 hours would cover the five shifts that public employees who work a 24-hour shift miss as a result of their two-week training (120 hours) and the one shift for the 12 days of annual weekend duty (288 hours).

Political subdivisions

Municipalities and townships would incur the greatest increase in payroll costs under the bill, as they employ the majority of firefighters and emergency responders. The 26 counties that operate a county-wide emergency response system and that employ EMTs would also incur higher payroll costs. Firefighter and emergency responder salaries are paid from the respective local subdivision's general fund. Variables affecting any net increase in payroll costs would be the number of employees eligible for military leave, their wages, and the amount of leave used, as not every eligible employee would use the full amount of additional leave provided.

To illustrate the bill's potential impact on political subdivisions, the table below displays how the bill could have affected payroll costs for fire departments in four cities during FY 2009. The calculations compare the cost differences between the current leave allowance and the increased amount permitted by the bill and assume that all eligible employees use all permitted leave time. The difference is the net new cost that these municipal fire departments would have incurred with the added military leave benefit.

Cost of Additional Firefighter Military Leave by City, FY 2009					
City	Eligible Firefighters	Hourly Wage Rate (\$)	Current Cost at 176 Hours Used (\$)	H.B. 433 Cost if 408 Hours Used (\$)	Difference (\$)
Columbus	31	15.02 – 23.00	81,949 – 125,488	189,973 – 290,904	108,024 – 165,416
Toledo	8	18.06 – 27.14	25,428 – 38,213	58,947 – 88,585	33,519 – 50,372
Dayton	8	17.45 – 23.28	24,569 – 32,778	56,956 – 75,985	32,387 – 43,207
Bowling Green	5	15.94 – 22.74	14,027 – 20,011	32,517 – 46,389	18,490 – 26,378

According to licensing information provided to LSC by the Board of Emergency Medical Services, the entity that licenses firefighters and emergency medical workers, as of the end of FY 2009 there were 25,243 licensed firefighters and 38,726 licensed EMTs in Ohio. Although most firefighters are public employees and qualify for the added benefit under the bill, it is more difficult to determine the number of EMTs who are eligible. This is because many of the licensed EMTs counted above work for private companies and do not qualify under the bill. Also, many licensed EMTs are also licensed firefighters, suggesting that the number of EMTs that qualify for the additional benefit would be far fewer than the total number of licensed EMTs noted above.

State costs – Adjutant General

Currently, the state directly employs 95 firefighters through the ADJ to protect the National Guard armories and compounds from fire. The state does not employ any EMTs. During FY 2009, 35 of the firefighters employed by ADJ were active military reserve members. Had the bill been in effect during that fiscal year, ADJ would have incurred up to \$157,000 in increased payroll costs if all eligible employees had taken all of the 408 hours of leave. The pay range for state-employed firefighters is currently between \$16.09 and \$23.76 per hour. Assuming that the number of eligible ADJ employees remains steady at 35, annual ADJ payroll expenses could increase in the range of \$131,000 (232 hours of additional leave x \$16.09 x 35 employees) to \$193,000 (232 hours of additional leave x \$23.76 x 35 employees). As previously stated, the amount spent on the additional leave would vary from year to year according to the number of eligible firefighters and their salaries. ADJ's payroll costs are borne by the GRF and federal funds.