

# State Employment Relations Board

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- The enacted budget provides funding for four new IT initiatives
- The Board's Training, Publications, and Grants Fund (Fund 572), broadened to allow receipt of grants and other contributions

## OVERVIEW

### Duties and Responsibilities

The State Employment Relations Board (SERB) is a three-member board that acts as a neutral, quasi-judicial body in administering Chapter 4117. of the Revised Code, Ohio's Public Employees' Collective Bargaining Law. The SERB's responsibilities are divided among six divisions. The Hearing Section makes findings and legal recommendations on unfair labor practices; the Representation Section oversees the election process and conducts representation elections; the Investigation Section investigates unfair labor practices; the Bureau of Mediation resolves strikes and impasses in contract negotiations; the Research and Training Section maintains a database of wage and benefit information; and the Clerk's Office handles the scheduling of cases before the Board and maintains the automated docketing system.

### Agency in Brief

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Number of Employees*	Total Appropriations-All Funds		GRF Appropriations		Appropriation Bill(s)
	2006	2007	2006	2007	
31	\$3.34 million	\$3.44 million	\$3.27 million	\$3.63 million	Am. Sub. H.B. 66

\*Employee count obtained from the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) payroll reports as of June 2005.

### Summary of the FY 2006-2007 Enacted Budget

The enacted budget appropriates \$3.34 million in FY 2006 and \$3.44 million in FY 2007, for a total of \$6.78 million over the biennium. The Board's FY 2006 appropriations increase 9% compared to FY 2005 actual spending, whereas FY 2007 levels increase 3% above FY 2006 appropriations. Ninety-eight percent of the board's funding comes from the GRF, which covers increased payroll and employee benefits, while the 2% comes from the GSF, which covers training and publications. Overall, the board's FY 2006-2007 appropriations will support current staffing and program levels, provide for a 4% pay increase, provide funding for several new information technology initiatives, and allow the board to accept grants and other contributions into its Training, Publications, and Grants Fund (Fund 572).

### Information Technology Initiative

The enacted budget will allow the SERB to fund four new information technology initiatives. The first initiative will update the board's Clearinghouse database, which provides state-wide collective bargaining information to allow more efficient internal data input and instant on-line consumer data

access – the budget includes \$100,200 for this update. The second initiative will provide on-line subscription and access to the board's publications – the budget provides \$40,000 for these new services. The third initiative will provide a web-based, searchable database for the board's fact-finder reports and conciliation orders – the budget includes \$35,100 to develop this database. The fourth initiative involves implementation of an electronic filing system to add documents to the board's docketing system – the budget provides \$5,100 for this system.

### **Training, Publications, and Grants Fund**

The enacted budget renamed the SERB's Training and Publications Fund (Fund 572) to the Training, Publications, and Grants Fund and added three additional funding sources to support the fund. The change now allows the fund to receive moneys from grants, donations, awards, bequests, and gifts; reimbursements for the board's professional services; and funds to support the development of labor relations services and programs. In addition, the bill expands the use of the funds to cover grant projects, innovative labor-management programs, and professional development.

### **Vetoed Provisions**

The Governor did not veto any provisions affecting the State Employment Relations Board.

## ANALYSIS OF THE ENACTED BUDGET

For budget purposes, as detailed below, the State Employment Relations Board is considered a single program series agency and its activities are not subdivided into separate programs.

### Program Series 1

### Operating Expenses

**Purpose:** To monitor public employer compliance with the Ohio's Collective Bargaining Law.

The following table shows the enacted appropriations that are used to fund the State Employment Relations Board.

Fund	ALI	Title	FY 2006	FY 2007
<b>General Revenue Fund</b>				
GRF	125-321	Operating Expenses	\$3,265,397	\$3,363,359
<b>General Revenue Fund Subtotal</b>			<b>\$3,265,397</b>	<b>\$3,363,359</b>
<b>General Services Fund</b>				
572	125-603	Training and Publications	\$75,541	\$75,541
<b>General Services Fund Subtotal</b>			<b>\$75,541</b>	<b>\$75,541</b>
<b>Total Funding: State Employment Relations Board</b>			<b>\$3,340,938</b>	<b>\$3,438,900</b>

This analysis focuses on the following specific programs within the State Employment Relations Board:

- **Labor Disputes**
- **Research and Training**

### Labor Disputes

**Program Description:** The State Employment Relations Board (SERB) acts as a quasi-judicial body in monitoring compliance of Ohio's Collective Bargaining Law. The Labor Disputes program assists parties with active labor issues by mediating contract negotiations, investigating and attempting to mediate or hear and decide alleged unfair labor practices, and processing petitions parties have filed to resolve questions concerning representation.

**Funding Source:** GRF

**Implication of the Enacted Budget:** The enacted budget will allow the board to maintain current program and staffing levels for the Labor Disputes program. The board will use a portion of its program funds to cover mandated payroll increases and provide for information technology upgrades. The board does not plan to hire or contract any new personnel for this program.

### Research and Training

**Program Description:** The Research and Training program provides statutorily required wage and benefit information for parties in bargaining negotiations and trains public employers and employee

organizations in acceptable bargaining practices. In addition, SERB provides three seminars each year and fact-finder conferences. The most popular seminar, SERB Academy, is a two-day review of representation, dispute settlement, and unfair labor practice matters, covering the law, the administrative rules, and the day-to-day procedures of the agency. The SERB also publishes reports, such as the SERB Quarterly and the Quarterly Supplement.

***Funding Sources:*** GRF, training registration fees, and publication sales revenue

***Implication of the Enacted Budget:*** The enacted budget will allow the board to maintain current program and staffing levels for the Research and Training Program. The Board will use a portion of its program funds to cover mandated payroll increases and to support the board's new information technology expenses. The board does not plan to hire or contract any new personnel for this program.

***Permanent Law Provision: Training, Publications, and Grants Fund (R.C. section 4117.24).*** The enacted budget includes a change that will now allow the board to accept grant monies, gifts, and contributions into its GSF rotary fund (Fund 572) for employee training expenses. This change will only affect the Research and Training program, not the Labor Disputes program. The board indicates it will pursue grant opportunities from World Learning USAID as well as other organizations.