



**House  
Legislative  
Analysis  
Section**

Washington Square Building, Suite 1025  
Lansing, Michigan 48909  
Phone: 517/373-6466

**YOUTH CENTER MILLAGE ELECTION**

**RECEIVED**

**Senate Bill 846 (Substitute H-2)**  
**First Analysis (9-22-88)**

**OCT 07 1988**

**Sponsor: Sen. Phil Arthurhultz**     **Mich. State Law Library**  
**Senate Committee: Local Government and Veterans**  
**House Committee: Taxation**

***THE APPARENT PROBLEM:***

Public Act 179 of 1967 permits any county, city, township, village, or combination of these local governments, to levy taxes and appropriate funds for the operation of centers opened exclusively to youths under 21 years of age and aimed at curbing juvenile delinquency within a community. To date, no such centers have been established under the act. A group of West Michigan residents, however, recently attempted to use the act as a means for taking action to help youths in their community avoid getting into trouble. The residents reportedly encountered opposition from their county commissioners, who were reluctant to take the necessary action to place the millage question on the ballot. Some people believe that, to prevent residents from being stymied in this way, voters should be able to put the question of a youth center millage on the ballot by submitting valid petitions, which is not permitted now.

***THE CONTENT OF THE BILL:***

The bill would amend Public Act 179 of 1967 to permit a registered elector in a county, city, township, or village to file petitions requesting that the unit submit to the voters at the next general election the question of levying an ad valorem property tax of not to exceed 1.5 mills for not more than 20 years on taxable property within the unit for the purpose of operating a youth center aimed at curbing juvenile delinquency. Petitions would have to be filed with the local clerk at least 120 days prior to the election date and would have to be signed by a number of registered electors equal to at least five percent of the total vote cast in the unit for all candidates for governor at the last gubernatorial election. A determination of the sufficiency or insufficiency of a petition would have to be made no later than 60 days before the election. If the petitions were sufficient, the question would be on the ballot, specifying the number of mills to be levied and the specific time period for which the mills would be levied. A tax authorized by the bill would be levied and collected in the same manner and at the same time as other ad valorem taxes in the local unit.

The act currently allows any county, city, township, or village "or any combination of counties, cities, townships or villages" to levy taxes and appropriate funds for youth centers. The bill would remove the reference to the combination of local units.

MCL 123.461

***HOUSE COMMITTEE ACTION:***

The House Taxation Committee adopted a substitute that differs from the Senate-passed version in two respects: 1) it removes from the 1967 act the provision allowing local units of government to join together to levy taxes for youth centers; and 2) it limits the amount that can be levied to 1.5 mills and restricts the length of time the mills can be levied to 20 years.

***FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:***

The Senate Fiscal Agency reports that the bill has no fiscal implications to the state. (9-12-88)

***ARGUMENTS:***

***For:***

Many communities are concerned about increases in youth violence and are looking for ways to steer young people away from illegal activities. A youth center would provide a place where kids could go to meet their peers, socialize, and participate in activities such as sports, rather than seek an outlet on the streets. Proponents of the bill emphasize that these youth centers would not function as juvenile detention centers, but would serve as a proactive or preventive approach to juvenile crime. For example, these centers could sponsor substance abuse programs in an attempt to reach young people before they start using or selling drugs.

***For:***

People now are able to petition the government and place issues on the ballot when authorized by the state constitution, state law, or local governmental charters. For example, petitions may be submitted to the appropriate authorities to amend the constitution, initiate a state law, or conduct a referendum on a state law. Various charters of local governments also provide for similar initiative and referendum activities on local ordinances by way of petitioning the local government. Under Senate Bill 846, registered electors would be granted similar authority to petition their local government on the issue of levying taxes for a youth center.

***POSITIONS:***

There are no positions at present.

S.B. 846 (9-22-88)