



**House
Legislative
Analysis
Section**

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CREATE TOURISM POLICY ACT

House Bill 4808

Sponsor: Rep. Beverly Bodem

Committee: Tourism & Recreation

Complete to 6-9-93

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILL 4808 AS INTRODUCED 5-25-93

Public Act 106 of 1945 is the enabling act for the Michigan Travel Bureau and the Michigan Travel Commission, both of which work to promote tourism within the state. The bill would rename the act the "Michigan Tourism Policy Act," and would assign to the bureau and commission certain functions related to the long-term development and promotion of the state's tourism industry. Specifically, the bill would require them, in consultation with each other and certain divisions of the Department of Commerce, to develop a comprehensive, long-range master plan for a period of at least two years and not more than five years that identified certain goals related to tourism development and programs to implement the goals. The master plan would have to be updated by the bureau, the commission and the appropriate divisions of the commerce department as necessary.

New Bureau Activities. In addition to other activities, the bill would require the travel bureau to do all of the following:

- * Before funding a promotional effort, identify and document those benefits to the state that the bureau determined were likely to result from the promotional effort;
- * Withhold funds for any proposed promotional effort that the bureau felt would not likely benefit the state's travel industry or conform with the master plan's goals;
- * If it spent funds for a promotional effort, identify and document the actual benefits, if any, to the state that resulted from that effort;
- * To the "maximum extent feasible," make travel to and within the state easier;
- * Occasionally convene interagency committees that consisted of representatives of state governmental units that could be required to devise recommendations to identify and solve tourism problems; and
- * Provide informational assistance and guidance to regional, county and city tourism development organizations and similar private organizations in planning programs to attract visitors.

The bill also would require the bureau to develop within the commerce department a formal, written policy governing travel bureau employee acceptance of free meals or lodging, and implement the policy within one year of the bill's effective date. One year after the bill took effect, the bureau would have to submit to the commission, the governor and the legislature an annual report that contained 1) a statement identifying and analyzing expenditures authorized by the bureau during the previous 12 months, and a summary of the results of those expenditures, and 2) a tourism marketing plan for the next fiscal year. Language requiring the bureau to do various things (conduct tourism planning and research studies for marketing purposes, encourage the development of tourism facilities and

activities, provide basic support and discretionary grants to local and regional agencies for tourism development, and the like) would be deleted.

New Commission Duties. The travel commission, in addition to certain other duties (i.e., promulgating rules, conducting public hearings), would have to:

- * assist the bureau in developing the master plan;
- * annually assess the bureau's activities and accomplishments, and convey each assessment in writing to the commerce department director;
- * work to the maximum extent practicable with those private associations, nonprofit corporations, organizations or other private entities that promote tourism in Michigan; and
- * withhold expenditure of funds otherwise authorized under the act if the bureau felt that the proposed expenditure was for an activity that did not conform with the master plan's goals, or did not benefit the state's travel industry.

The bill would delete language that currently requires the commission to develop marketing and advertising strategies and bureau priorities for travel promotion development, and prepare detailed annual reports to the commerce department director relative to the bureau's programs, policies and accomplishments. Also, the bill would allow the commission, in cooperation with the bureau, to convene committees consisting of qualified professionals and experts in various segments of the tourism industry that could be required to aid in the preparation of, or revision of, all or part of a marketing plan.

Other Provisions. The bill would require the 13-member commission to meet at least quarterly, or more frequently if requested by eight or more commissioners, or at the call of the chair. A majority of the commission would constitute a quorum for the transaction of commission business, and a majority of members present and serving would be required for the commission to take official action. Commission business would have to be conducted at a public meeting as required under the Open Meetings Act, and a document prepared, owned, used, in the possession of, or retained by it in an official capacity would be subject to the Freedom of Information Act.

MCL 2.101, et al.