

OFFICIAL FLAG MONTH

House Bill 5129 as passed by the House Second Analysis (1-7-98)

Sponsor: Rep. Paul Wojno
Committee: Regulatory Affairs

THE APPARENT PROBLEM:

The United States flag is a symbol imbued with many of the values and ideals embraced by many of the citizens of this nation and of the state of Michigan. Many believe that displaying the United States flag on one's own property is an admirable expression of patriotism and support for this country's values and ideals. It is also seen as way of remembering and honoring those who have given their lives in service of this country and as a way of expressing support for the men and women who are currently dedicated to protecting and preserving this country's values and ideals, especially those who serve in the armed forces.

THE CONTENT OF THE BILL:

The bill would designate June 14 through July 14 each year as the official flag month of Michigan. The bill would also encourage people to observe the following guidelines when displaying of the flag of the United States:

- The flag of the United States should be at the center and at the highest point of the group when a number of flags of states or localities or pennants of societies are grouped and displayed from staffs.
- When flags of states, cities or localities, or pennants of societies are flown on the same halyard with the flag of the United States, the flag of the United States should be at the peak. When the flags are flown from adjacent staffs, the flag of the United States should be hoisted first and lowered last. No other flag or pennant should be placed above the flag of the United States or to the United States flag's right.
- When the flags of two or more nations are displayed, they should be flown from separate staffs of the same height. The flags should be of approximately equal size. A flag of one nation should not be placed above the flag of another nation in a time of peace.
- When the flag of the United States is displayed from a staff projecting horizontally or at an angle from the

window sill, balcony, or front of a building, the union of the flag should be placed at the peak of the staff. The flag should be hoisted out, union first, from the building.

- When the flag of the United States is displayed either horizontally or vertically against a wall, the union should be uppermost and to the flag's own right and should be to the observer's left. When displayed in a window, the flag of the United States should be displayed in the same way, with the union or blue field to the left of the observer in the street.
- When the flag is displayed over the middle of the street, it should be suspended vertically with the union to the north in an east-west street and to the east in a north-south street.
- When used on a speaker's platform, the flag, if displayed flat, should be displayed above and behind the speaker.
- When displayed from a staff in a church or public auditorium, the flag of the United States should be at the clergyman's or speaker's right as he or she faces the audience. Any other flag displayed should be placed on the left of the clergyman or speaker or to the right of the audience.
- The flag of the United States should form a distinctive feature of the ceremony of unveiling a public statue or monument, but the flag should not be used as the covering for the public statue or monument.
- The flag of the United States, when flown at half-staff, should be first hoisted to the peak for an instant and then lowered to the half-staff position. The flag should be raised to the peak before it is lowered for the day.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

According to the House Fiscal Agency, the bill would have no fiscal impact. (10-23-97)

ARGUMENTS:

For:

More than any other symbol of the United States, the U.S. flag is seen to represent all that is good and noble and right about this country. When it is displayed it projects the image of strength and freedom and instills a sense of pride in citizens. Given the beauty of the flag and all that it represents, it should be displayed more often. Although the flag month created by the bill does not require citizens to fly the flag during that time, it is hoped that it will encourage citizens to show their pride in their country by doing so.

POSITIONS:

There are no positions on the bill.

Analyst: W. Flory

■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.