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SFA**BILL ANALYSIS**

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House Bill 4811 (Draft Senate Substitute (S-1))

Sponsor: Representative Liz Brater

Committee: Appropriations Subcommittee on the Family Independence Agency

Date Completed: 10-23-97

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Social Welfare Act to require that the Family Independence Agency (FIA) develop and implement standards and procedures to identify cash assistance recipients who are domestic violence victims, refer those persons for appropriate services, and waive certain assistance program requirements if compliance with those requirements would make it difficult to escape domestic violence or would otherwise penalize persons at risk of domestic violence. The information on administration and granting of waivers would have to be collected and compiled for an annual report to the Legislature. The Department also would have to incorporate into the State plan the Governor's certification that Michigan has established and is enforcing standards and procedures to assist cash assistance recipients who are victims of domestic violence. The bill includes an effective date of October 1, 1998.

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, the Federal welfare reform legislation, includes a provision also known as the Wellstone/Murray provision, which allows states to include domestic violence victim screening and services as part of their welfare program.

If Michigan opts to include this program in the State's welfare activities, the State plan is required to include the Governor's certification that Michigan established and is enforcing the standards in order to receive the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Block Grant (formerly Aid to Families with Dependent Children) funds for this option. The certification is necessary in order to allow the Department to count cash assistance recipients who are waived from the work requirements, to be included in the caseload count for Federal reimbursement.

Proposed MCL 400.56i

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have no fiscal impact on State or local governments. The Family Independence Agency indicates that it would train approximately 2,400 Family Independence Specialists and 440 Department managers at the local offices across the State to implement the bill's provisions. The estimated cost of the training is included in the FY 1997-98 appropriation. The Department is not certain how many current assistance recipients are victims of domestic violence; therefore, at this time it is difficult to determine the impact of a waiver of certain program requirements.

Fiscal Analyst: C. Cole

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