

Senate Fiscal Agency
P. O. Box 30036
Lansing, Michigan 48909-7536

SFA**BILL ANALYSIS**

Telephone: (517) 373-5383
Fax: (517) 373-1986
TDD: (517) 373-0543

Senate Bill 303 (as enrolled)
Sponsor: Senator Joe Young, Jr.
Committee: Government Operations

Date Completed: 3-16-99

RATIONALE

The massive growth in the popularity and accessibility of the Internet in recent years has revolutionized the ability of private industry, private citizens, and public entities to produce, disseminate, and gather information. In September 1997, the website "http://www.michiganlegislature.org/" was established to provide Internet users with access to a variety of information regarding the Michigan Legislature. Documents and various data originate from both houses of the Legislature and the Legislative Service Bureau; the Library of Michigan provides administrative oversight. Information on the Michigan Legislature Internet site includes Senate and House bills and resolutions; bill analysis documents; Senate and House committee schedules, journals, calendars, and session schedules; Public Acts Tables for 1997 and 1998; and Michigan Compiled Laws Tables for 1997 and 1998. While many persons view the website as an excellent tool for the Legislature to provide, and for the people to obtain, critical information regarding legislative business, it was pointed out that there was no formal requirement that the Legislature continue to provide information on the Internet. In response, in 1998 six laws were enacted to require the Legislative Council to make available certain information on the Internet. It now has been pointed out that the Michigan Register is not among the documents required to be placed on the Internet; it has been suggested that there also be a requirement to include this publication on the website.

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Legislative Council Act to require the Legislative Council, beginning January 1, 2001, to make available to the public on the Internet the text of the Michigan Register.

The Legislative Council could not charge a fee for providing the Michigan Register on the Internet. The bill specifies that it would not alter or relinquish any copyright or other proprietary interest or entitlement of the State relating to any of the information made available in the Michigan Register on the Internet. The information that was maintained by the Council would have to be made available in the shortest

feasible time after it was available; information not maintained by the Council would have to be made available in the shortest feasible time after it was made available to the Council.

MCL 4.1203

BACKGROUND

The Administrative Procedures Act requires the Legislative Service Bureau to publish the Michigan Register every month. The Act contains a list of items that must be placed in the publication, including executive orders; enrolled bills signed into law and the corresponding public act numbers; vetoes; proposed administrative rules and notices of public hearings to be held on the proposed rules; administrative rules and emergency rules filed with the Secretary of State; Attorney General opinions; and other information, including information considered necessary or appropriate by the Bureau.

ARGUMENTS

(Please note: The arguments contained in this analysis originate from sources outside the Senate Fiscal Agency. The Senate Fiscal Agency neither supports nor opposes legislation.)

Supporting Argument

The Internet has become an important tool for those who wish to acquire information in an inexpensive, fast, and efficient manner. Its popularity and use are likely to keep increasing. Through its website the Legislature offers a substantial amount of useful information to enable any resident (or anyone anywhere in the world, for that matter) to keep track of proposed legislation, legislative schedules, official legislative action, new laws, etc. The climate now is conducive to promoting citizen access to legislative information via the Internet, and the 1998 acts will ensure that future legislatures will continue this practice. By enacting a requirement that the Michigan Register also be placed on the Internet, the bill would ensure convenient access to additional information.

Legislative Analyst: G. Towne

FISCAL IMPACT

The revenue generated from the sale of the Michigan Register totaled \$45,400 in FY 1997-98. Providing the information free of charge on the Internet would have an impact on the revenue generated by the sale of the Michigan Register, if sales of the booklet were affected.

Fiscal Analyst: B. Bowerman

A9900\303a

This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.