

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILL 5968 AS INTRODUCED 4-25-02

House Bill 5968 would amend the Michigan Merit Award Scholarship Act to include the use of a student's results from his or her social studies assessment, in qualifying for the merit award scholarship. Currently a student qualifies with scores earned on subject area tests in reading, writing, mathematics, and science, but not with scores earned on the social studies subject area test. The inclusion of social studies test results would begin with assessment test taken by students after the 2001-2002 school year.

Currently under the law, the Michigan Merit Award Scholarship program makes \$2,500 scholarships available to eligible high school students who enroll in approved post-secondary in-state educational institutions (or \$1,000 scholarships if enrolled out-of-state), if a student has taken assessment tests in the subject areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and science, and received qualifying results in all of them; or in all but one or two of them but received an overall score in the top 25 percent of a nationally recognized college admission examination; or received a qualifying score or scores on a nationally recognized job skills assessment test. House Bill 5968 would retain these provisions and include, in addition, the assessment in the subject area of social studies, beginning with assessment tests taken by students after the 2001-2002 school year.

In addition and under the law, the scholarship program makes awards to students while in grades 7 and 8 when they earn qualifying results on subject matter tests in reading, writing, mathematics and science. A student receives a \$250 scholarship for qualifying results on two of the four tests; a \$375 scholarship for results on three of the four tests; and, a \$500 scholarship for results on all four of the tests. House Bill 5968 specifies instead that beginning with assessment tests taken by students after the 2001-2002 school year, qualifying results while in grades 7 and 8 in two of the five subject area assessments of reading writing, mathematics, science, and social studies would earn the student a \$200 scholarship; qualifying results in three subject matter assessments, \$300; qualifying results in four subject matter assessments, \$400; and qualifying results in all five, \$500.

The bill would define "social studies" to mean that term as defined in section 1279 of the Revised School Code. [Section 1279 defines social studies to mean "geography, history, economics, and American government."]

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■ 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.