




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



BILL ANALYSIS

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

House Bill 4914 (Substitute S-2)  
Sponsor: Representative David Palsrok  
House Committee: Great Lakes and Tourism  
Senate Committee: Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs

Date Completed: 12-9-03

### **CONTENT**

**The bill would amend Part 801 (Marine Safety) of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to require the Secretary of State (SOS) to forward \$25 from the sale of each Great Lakes Protection speciality watercraft decal to the State Treasurer for aquatic nuisance species research, public education, and eradication efforts.** The bill is tie-barred to Senate Bills 535 and 536, which would require the Secretary of State to design a Great Lakes Protection speciality watercraft decal and make it available for purchase when a person paid for a vessel's certificate of number and decal.

Under House Bill 4914 (S-2), the SOS would retain \$10 from the sale of each decal as reimbursement for the cost of creating and distributing the decals. The SOS would have to forward the remainder to the Treasurer for deposit into the Michigan Great Lakes Protection Fund to be used for research on aquatic nuisance species, public education on the threat of aquatic nuisance species, and efforts to eradicate aquatic nuisance species from the Great Lakes and other waters of the State.

(The Act defines "aquatic nuisance species" as a nonindigenous species that threatens the diversity or abundance of native species or the ecological stability of infested waters, or commercial, agricultural, aquacultural, or recreational activities dependent on such waters.)

Proposed MCL 324.80124b

### **BACKGROUND**

The governors of the Great Lakes states formed the Great Lakes Protection Fund in 1989. A private, nonprofit corporation, the Fund is a permanent environmental endowment supporting actions to improve the health of the Great Lakes ecosystem. The Fund's board of directors consists of two, governor-appointed representatives from each member state. The Fund makes grants and program-related investments in regional projects.

Section 33103 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act authorizes Michigan's governor to take all steps necessary to join with other states to form and operate the Fund, provided that it is used for Great Lakes research and protection activities, including:

- Research on the economic, environmental, and human health effects of contamination in the Great Lakes.
- The collection and analysis of data on the Great Lakes.
- The development of new or improved environmental cleanup technologies.
- Research to assess the effectiveness of pollution control policies.
- The assessment of the health of Great Lakes fish, waterfowl, and other organisms.

The Michigan Great Lakes Protection Fund receives grants from the regional Great Lakes Protection Fund, as well as other funding. The Office of the Great Lakes, within the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, administers Great Lakes Protection Fund grants for research, education, and awareness activities. The Office of the Great Lakes also implements the comprehensive aquatic nuisance species control plan developed in accordance with the Federal Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Species Prevention and Control Program.

Legislative Analyst: Claire Layman

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The bill, together with Senate Bills 535 and 536, would have an indeterminate fiscal impact depending on the number of Great Lakes Protection specialty watercraft decals issued. There are approximately 915,000 registered watercraft in Michigan.

The bills would result in costs to the Department of State related to the design and production of Great Lakes Protection specialty watercraft decals. No cost estimate is available from the Department. The extent to which the Department's costs would be offset by revenue, and the amount of revenue generated for the Michigan Great Lakes Protection Fund, would depend on the number of decals sold.

Fiscal Analyst: Bill Bowerman