



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 5200 (Substitute S-2 as reported)
Sponsor: Representative Randy Richardville
House Committee: Government Operations
Senate Committee: Local, Urban and State Affairs

Date Completed: 3-29-04

RATIONALE

October 2003 marked the 35th anniversary of the Detroit Tigers' 1968 World Series championship. One of the key players for the Tigers that season was Willie Horton, who grew up in poverty in Detroit and later became a star with his hometown team, which retired his number. In July 2000, a statue was erected in his honor at Comerica Park. His achievements have gone beyond the baseball diamond, as he was instrumental in keeping the peace in Detroit during the 1967 riots, and has been involved in a number of community organizations. It has been suggested that Willie Horton's birthday, October 18, be proclaimed Willie Horton day in Michigan.

CONTENT

The bill would declare that October 18 of each year be known as "Willie Horton Day", "in recognition of the fundamental contribution that Willie Horton has made to the city of Detroit and the state of Michigan through his humanitarian works". The bill points out that Willie Horton was raised in a Detroit housing project, played for the Detroit Tigers, and throughout his career has been involved in organizations such as the United Way, Boys and Girls Club of America, Meals on Wheels, and the Foundation Fighting Blindness. The bill states that in 1967 Willie Horton used his ambassadorship and goodwill to help crush the Detroit riots, and he was honored by the Detroit Tigers in 2000 when they retired his number and erected a statue in his name at Comerica Park.

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

Annually marking Willie Horton's birthday would be a fitting way to recognize that people can rise from a disadvantaged background to be leaders in their community. Horton's work with the disadvantaged through such organizations as the United Way, Boys and Girls Club of America, and Meals on Wheels, show that star athletes can give back to the community from which they came. A day in Horton's honor would mark the man's unique contributions to the State of Michigan.

Legislative Analyst: J.P. Finet

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have no fiscal impact on State or local government.

Fiscal Analyst: Bill Bowerman

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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.