



Senate Fiscal Agency
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BILL ANALYSIS



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Senate Bill 1129 (Substitute S-1 as reported)
Senate Bill 1130 (as reported without amendment)
Sponsors: Senator Michelle A. McManus (S.B. 1129)
 Senator Tom George (S.B. 1130)
Committee: Local, Urban and State Affairs

Date Completed: 7-6-06

RATIONALE

While Michigan is often referred to as "the Great Lake State", few depictions of the State show the portions of Lake Michigan, Lake Superior, Lake Huron, and Lake Erie that are within its borders. The familiar depiction of Michigan as a pair of peninsulas that is found in most State publications represents only about 60% of the State's area because it does not include its water boundaries, which also excludes 348 named islands. Additionally, unlike previous versions, the current Michigan Constitution contains no description of the State's boundaries. Some people believe that depictions of Michigan in State publications should include its water boundaries and that Michigan's boundaries should be described in State law.

CONTENT

The bills would amend different statutes concerning government publications and the State's boundaries, to require that State agency depictions of Michigan be to scale and include water and land boundaries, and to enact a legal description of Michigan's boundaries.

The bills are described below.

Senate Bill 1129 (S-1)

The bill would amend Public Act 44 of 1899 (which provides for the publication and distribution of various publications, laws, reports, and other documents) to provide that, beginning January 26, 2008, if a State agency depicted the State in any type of

medium, the depiction would have to include the water boundaries, land boundaries, and islands of the State appropriate to size or scale.

Senate Bill 1130

The bill would amend Public Act 78 of 1945 (which declares the area of the State) to declare the total area of the State of Michigan to be approximately 96,720 square miles based on the boundaries of the State, and add a legal description of territory over which the State has jurisdiction within the boundaries. The bill would require that the description be printed in the *Michigan Manual* and successor publications with an unofficial appropriate general reference map.

The Act declares the State to be 96,720 square miles consisting of 57,022 square miles of land and 39,698 square miles of inland water as based on the boundaries of the State of Michigan according to Article I, Section 1 of the State Constitution of 1909 and the U.S. Statutes at Large approved on June 15, 1836. The bill would delete that language.

Currently, all official State publications, in which the total area, total land area, or total water area of Michigan is stated, must use the figures provided in the Act. Under the bill, all official State publications in which the total area of Michigan was stated would have to use the figure provided in the Act.

Proposed MCL 24.39 (S.B. 1129)
MCL 2.1 & 2.2 (S.B. 1130)

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

With water shortages in some parts of the country putting an increased strain on the nation's fresh water supply, the value of the Great Lakes as a resource has increased considerably over the past few years. While 40% of Michigan consists of the Great Lakes, many residents do not know the extent of the State's water resources because they are rarely included in official depictions of the State. Maps can exert a strong influence on people's perceptions. By requiring water boundaries to be included in depictions of the State, Senate Bill 1129 (S-1) would help residents recognize the extent of Michigan's water resources and the State's responsibility to protect them, and could help discourage other states' efforts to divert water from the Great Lakes.

Reportedly, since Michigan achieved statehood, it has lost territory to Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Ohio--which gained Lake Erie surface acreage as recently as the 1970s--because of border disputes. By including a clear description of the State's boundaries in Public Act 78 of 1945, Senate Bill 1130 should prevent future disagreements as to the location of Michigan's borders.

Legislative Analyst: J.P. Finet

FISCAL IMPACT

The bills would have an indeterminate impact on State agencies. No specific estimate is available from the administration. Costs would depend in part on whether revisions would have to be made by January 26, 2008, or whether they would be implemented over time when publications are reprinted.

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.