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House Bill 6612 (as discharged)  
Sponsor: Representative Doug Bennett  
House Committee: Great Lakes and Environment  
Senate Committee: Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs

## **CONTENT**

The bill would amend Part 25 (Environmental Education) of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to do the following:

- Increase the maximum amount of civil fines that must be appropriated to the Environmental Education Fund annually.
- Designate the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) the administrator of the Fund for auditing purposes.

Under Part 25, 25% of the civil fines collected annually under Parts 31 (Water Resources Protection), 111 (Hazardous Waste Management), and 115 (Solid Waste Management), but not more than \$150,000 in any fiscal year, must be appropriated to the Fund. The bill would increase the maximum amount to \$250,000 per fiscal year.

(Money in the Fund must be used to implement Part 25 and may be used for the establishment and operation of a clearinghouse of environmental education materials that would be made available to educators throughout the State.)

The bill also would repeal Section 2504, which allowed the DEQ Director to establish the Environmental Education Advisory Committee, prescribed its membership and duties, and required the Director to prepare and submit to the Legislature by July 19, 1997, a report that evaluated the effectiveness of Part 25 and recommended whether the Committee should be continued.

MCL 324.2505 et al.

Legislative Analyst: Julie Cassidy

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

The Environmental Education Fund receives a portion of the civil fine revenue that otherwise would be deposited into the Settlement Funds account. The bill would increase the maximum amount of civil fines directed to the Environmental Education Fund from \$150,000 to \$250,000 annually. This would mean less money deposited into the Settlement Funds account and less money for the programs it supports. The Environmental Education Fund supports environmental education programs in the Department of Environmental Quality and the Settlement Funds account supports site cleanup activities, pollution prevention assistance, and water quality monitoring.

Date Completed: 12-11-08

Fiscal Analyst: Jessica Runnels