



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



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

Senate Bill 428 (as reported without amendment)
Sponsor: Senator Roger Kahn, M.D.
Committee: Veterans, Military Affairs and Homeland Security

Date Completed: 9-23-13

RATIONALE

Under Public Act 63 of 1915, upon the petition of a recognized veterans' organization or five eligible voters, the legislative body of a city, village, municipality, township, or county must furnish a United States flag and a suitable flag holder for the grave of each veteran who served in the U.S. Armed Forces and who is buried in a public or private cemetery within that local unit. Some people believe that, to honor these deceased veterans appropriately, the flags and flag holders should be manufactured and assembled in the United States.

CONTENT

The bill would amend Public Act 63 of 1915 to do the following:

- **Prohibit local units of government from buying flags or flag holders assembled or manufactured outside of the United States if competitively priced flags and holders of comparable quality made in Michigan or elsewhere in the U.S. were available.**
- **Require local units to post on their website that they bought foreign-made flags or flag holders because competitively priced and comparable quality products made in the U.S. were not available.**

Specifically, a city, village, municipality, township, or county that furnished flags and flag holders for veterans' graves could not purchase flag holders or U.S. flags assembled or manufactured outside of the United States, if flags and holders that were competitively priced and of comparable quality made in Michigan or elsewhere in the U.S. were available.

If a local unit bought flag holders or U.S. flags assembled or manufactured outside of the U.S. because competitively priced and comparable quality flags or holders made in Michigan or elsewhere in the U.S. were not available, the local unit would have to post notice of that action and reason on its website. The local unit also would have to post on that website the country of origin of the flag holders or U.S. flags that it bought.

MCL 35.831 & 35.831a

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

To honor the memory, service, and sacrifice of those who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces, State law provides for the graves of military veterans to be designated by the placement of a U.S. flag and suitable flag holder. Local units of government that procure and place these gravesite symbols should buy flags and flag holders that were made in the country the veterans

served. It would be inappropriate, for example, for a U.S. flag made in Korea or Vietnam to be placed on the grave of a veteran of the Korean War or the Vietnam War. Reportedly, American-made U.S. flags and holders are widely available at competitive prices, so buying them should not be a burden to local units.

Legislative Analyst: Patrick Affholter

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have an indeterminate and likely negligible impact on local unit expenses. It is unknown how many local units that furnish flags for the graves of U.S. military veterans currently use flags not made in Michigan or elsewhere in the United States. The relative prices of alternative flag manufacturers also are not known.

Fiscal Analyst: David Zin

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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.