



Senate Fiscal Agency
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BILL



ANALYSIS

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Senate Bill 176 (as introduced 2-22-17)
Sponsor: Senator Tom Casperson
Committee: Transportation

Date Completed: 2-28-17

CONTENT

The bill would amend Public Act 299 of 1996, which regulates tourist-oriented directional signs on rural roads, to include in the definition of "eligible attraction" a tourist-oriented activity that is visible from the rural road for which a tourist-oriented directional sign is sought if a sign for an eligible attraction is already in place in the vicinity for which the tourist-oriented directional sign is sought.

The Act required the Department of Transportation to implement a program for the placement of tourist-oriented directional signs and markers within the right-of-way of those portions of rural roads within State jurisdiction. The program must include, among other things, criteria for including on a sign the season and hours of an eligible attraction. The Department also must develop optional, standardized symbols for different types of activities associated with eligible attractions. An operator of a tourist-oriented activity who wishes to participate in a directional sign program must submit to the Department or its designee an application and a fee to receive a permit. If the eligible attraction for which a permit is in effect ceases operation, the owner or operator of the eligible attraction must return the permit to the Department or its designee.

The Act defines "tourist-oriented activity" as a lawful cultural, historical, recreational, educational, or commercial activity that is annually attended by 2,000 or more people and for which a major portion of the activity's income or visitors are derived during the normal business season from motorists not residing in the immediate area of the activity.

"Eligible attraction" means a tourist-oriented activity that is all of the following:

- Within 10 miles of the rural road for which a tourist-oriented directional sign is sought, unless otherwise restricted or permitted by the Department.
- Not visible from the rural road for which a tourist-oriented directional sign is sought.
- In compliance with Section 131 of Title 23 of the United States Code (which regulates outdoor advertising), and the national standards, criteria, and rules established under the Code, if the activity is advertised by rural road signs.

The bill would amend the definition of "eligible attraction" to create an exception to the requirement that a tourist-oriented activity is not visible from the rural road for which a tourist-oriented directional sign is sought. Under the bill, this would apply unless a sign for an eligible attraction were already in place in the vicinity for which the tourist-oriented directional sign was sought.

The bill would take effect 90 days after its enactment.

FISCAL IMPACT

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

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