

Legislative Analysis



ALLOW VISUAL REPRESENTATIONS OF CRIME VICTIMS TO BE BLURRED IN STREAMED COURT PROCEEDINGS

Phone: (517) 373-8080
<http://www.house.mi.gov/hfa>

House Bill 4421 as introduced
Sponsor: Rep. Stephanie A. Young
Committee: Criminal Justice
Revised 5-24-23

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

SUMMARY:

House Bill 4421 would amend the William Van Regenmorter Crime Victim's Rights Act to allow a crime victim's image to be blurred in certain court proceedings made available to the public. The act currently exempts certain information and visual representations of a crime victim from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), including a picture, photograph, drawing, or other visual representation of the victim, such as a film, videotape, or digitally stored image. The bill would additionally allow such a picture, photograph, drawing, or other visual representation to be blurred if it is from a court proceeding that is made available to the public through streaming on the internet or other means.

MCL 780.758 et seq.

BACKGROUND:

House Bill 4421 is a reintroduction of House Bill 5680 of the 2021-22 legislative session. That bill was passed by the House of Representatives.

FISCAL IMPACT:

House Bill 4421 would have an indeterminate fiscal impact on local units of government. The State Court Administrative Office has indicated that local courts would have to purchase and deploy software that would enable courts to blur victims' faces while on Zoom. This would also require a designated staff person to actively manage the filter. The costs for the software are not known at this time.

Legislative Analyst: Susan Stutzky
Fiscal Analyst: Robin Risko

■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House Fiscal Agency staff for use by House members in their deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.