

GROSSE ILE TOWNSHIP BRIDGE

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

House Bill 5779 (H-1) as reported from committee
Sponsor: Rep. Jaime Churches
Committee: Transportation, Mobility and Infrastructure
Revised 10-7-24

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

(Enacted as Public Act 126 of 2024)

SUMMARY:

House Bill 5779 would amend 1846 RS 16, which defines the powers and duties of townships, to allow Grosse Ile Township¹ to acquire, own, or operate, within or outside its corporate limits, a **public service facility** (i.e., a bridge) that provides transportation to the township and its residents and to charge a **user fee** for use of the bridge.

Public service facility would mean a bridge, a roadway or ramp that supports the bridge, and any other equipment, building, structure, parking area, appurtenance, or other real or personal property necessary or desirable for, and any future construction to replace, a bridge, the roadway or ramp that supports the bridge, and any other equipment, building, structure, parking area, appurtenance, or other real or personal property that is necessary for the bridge.

User fee would mean a toll, consumption charge, rent, license fee, or another similar or ancillary charge that is related to the use or purchase of a public service facility. User fee would include a fee or charge for creating, maintaining, administering, billing, and collecting an account.

To be eligible to receive state and federal money related to owning or operating a bridge, a township that owns or operates a public service facility would have to implement an inspection program that complies with federal regulations for bridge inspection standards² for all bridges owned or operated by the township.

MCL 41.1a to 41.110c

BACKGROUND:

Grosse Ile Township is an island. There are currently two crossings connecting the township to the mainland in Wayne County:

- The Grosse Ile Parkway Bridge, owned by the Wayne County Department of Public Services, for which there are no direct tolls or charges.

¹ The bill refers to a township with a population between 10,000 and 15,000 that is located in a county with a population greater than 1.5 million. As of the 2020 census, only Wayne County has a population greater than 1.5 million (it has 1.75 million people), and Grosse Ile Township (population 10,788) is the only township within Wayne County that has a population between 10,000 and 15,000.

² <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/23/144>

- The Grosse Ile Toll Bridge, owned by the Grosse Ile Bridge Company (GIBC), for which there is a toll.³

Both bridges are swing bridges—a type of movable bridge.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bill is permissive only and does not have a direct fiscal impact on the state or local units of government generally. As noted above, the population thresholds included in House Bill 5779 would limit the applicability of the bill to Grosse Ile Township.

According to committee testimony, Grosse Ile Township is looking to acquire, own, and operate the Grosse Ile Toll Bridge, owned by the GIBC. Township officials indicated that the intention is to finance bridge purchase, maintenance, and operating costs through tolls. Those costs were not identified in committee testimony.

POSITIONS:

Representatives of Grosse Ile Township testified in support of the bill. (6-11-24)

The Michigan Townships Association indicated support for the bill. (6-18-24)

Legislative Analyst: E. Best
Fiscal Analyst: William E. Hamilton

■ 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.

³ <https://grosseilebridge.com/>