Senate Fiscal Agency
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BILL ANALYSIS

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House Bill 5147 (as reported without amendment)
Sponsor: Representative Carrie Rheingans
House Committee: Higher Education
Senate Committee: Education

CONTENT

The bill would repeal Section 7 of the Higher Education Authorization and Distance Education Reciprocal Exchange Act, which establishes a sunset for the Act of September 30, 2029.

The Act provides for the reciprocal exchange of distance higher education between the State and other states or a higher education compact. It establishes an authorization and approval process for out-of-state distance higher education providers. The Act also prescribes the powers and duties of certain State agencies and officials, provides for the collection of fees, and establishes a complaint process for students enrolled in distance education programs.

Section 7 repeals the Act on September 30, 2029. The bill would delete this sunset language so that the Act would remain in effect beyond the sunset date.

MCL 390.1697 (repealed)

BRIEF RATIONALE

Michigan is a member of the Midwestern-State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (M-SARA), which sets interstate standards for postsecondary distance education. The Act enables the State's membership in the Agreement, which also assists higher education institutions in piloting multistate programs. All 15 of the State's public universities, in addition to 23 community colleges and 30 independent colleges and universities, operate multistate programs. In 2023, the Legislature enacted Public Act 127, which extended the Act's sunset from 2023 to 2029; however, testimony before the Senate Committee on Education indicates that, out of 49 states that operate under similar agreements or programs, Michigan is the only one that sunsets its program. Instead of continuously re-extending the enabling legislation, it has been suggested that the Act's sunset be removed.

Legislative Analyst: Abby Schneider

FISCAL IMPACT

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

Date Completed: 12-11-24

Fiscal Analyst: Josh Sefton