



**House
Legislative
Analysis
Section**

Washington Square Building, Suite 1025
Lansing, Michigan 48909
Phone: 517/373-6466

AFRICAN AMERICAN INTERAGENCY COUNCIL

House Bills 4405 and 4406

**Sponsor: Rep. David Honigman
Committee: Civil Rights
Complete to 3-15-89**

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***A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILLS 4405
AND 4406 AS INTRODUCED 3-9-89***

House Bills 4405 and 4406 would create the African American Affairs Interagency Council Act and the African American Affairs Commission Act, respectively, to serve the needs of African Americans in the state. Under the bills, "African American" would be defined to mean a person who had origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa; is identified by an employer in an federal employer information report as "black"; or is regarded in the community as having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.

House Bill 4406 would create the Office of African American Affairs and a 15-member African American Affairs Commission in the Department of Management and Budget. The department would be required to furnish administrative services, secretarial and other staff, professional employees, and office space for the commission and the office.

African American Affairs Commission. Under the bill, the commission would be appointed within 60 days after the act's effective date. The commission would exercise its powers and duties independently of the director of the Department of Management and Budget except for budget, procurement, and housekeeping functions. Commission members would be appointed by the governor — five from a list presented by the Senate Majority Leader and five from a list presented by the Speaker of the House — and would serve three-year staggered terms. Meetings would be held in accordance with the Open Meetings Act and the Freedom of information.

The commission would be required to do all of the following:

- Stimulate and encourage the study and review of the status of African Americans in the state;
- Develop a unified policy and plan of action to serve the needs of African Americans in the state;
- Advise the governor, the legislature, and the Office of African American Affairs on the coordination and administration of state programs serving African Americans;
- Make recommendations to the governor and legislature regarding changes in state programs, statutes, and policies;
- Advise the governor and legislature of the nature, magnitude, and priorities of the problems of African Americans in the state;
- Review and approve grants to be made from federal, state, or private funds that would be administered by the Office of African American Affairs;
- Review and advise the governor and the legislature on the state's policies concerning African American affairs;
- Secure appropriate recognition of African American accomplishments and contributions to the state;

- Review and approve the Office of African American Affairs' annual report;
- Make recommendations to the governor and legislature regarding methods of overcoming discrimination against African Americans in public and private employment and civil and political rights;
- Strengthen home life by directing attention to critical problems confronting African Americans in single parent households;
- Promote more effective methods for enabling African Americans to develop their skills, to continue their education, and to be trained in employment skills;
- Cooperate with and coordinate activities with the Indian Affairs Commission, the Commission on Spanish Speaking Affairs, and the Michigan Women's Commission;
- Monitor, evaluate, investigate, advocate, and initiate programs for the betterment of African Americans in the state;
- Promote African American entrepreneurship.

Office of African American Affairs. The director of the office would be selected by the African American Affairs Commission with the concurrence of the director of the Department of Management and Budget. The office would be required to do all of the following:

- Provide the commission with information concerning the problems of African Americans, and implement commission policy;
- Conduct studies and recommend solutions to the problems of African Americans in the areas of education, employment, civil rights, health, housing, senior citizens, and other related areas;
- Recommend to federal, state, and local governmental departments and agencies the creation of services and facilities as needed;
- Serve as a clearinghouse for the collection and distribution of information on African American affairs;
- Apply for and accept grants and gifts from governmental and private sources;
- Request the services of all state and local governmental departments and agencies to assure that African Americans had access to decision making bodies, the policies of which affect African Americans in this state;
- Cooperate with departments and agencies to aid in effectuating the purposes of the act;
- Submit a full written report of its activities and recommendations each year to the governor, legislature, and various African American communities throughout the state.

Bill 4405 would create the African American Affairs Interagency Council Act. Under the bill, an African American Affairs Interagency Council would be created in the Office of African American Affairs. The council would be required to coordinate and provide for the exchange of information on all programs relating to services for African Americans, and to assist the Office of African

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American Affairs and the African American Affairs Commission in the development of an annual report.

Under the bill, the council would consist of the following officials, or their designees: the directors of the Departments of Mental Health, Public Health, Social Services, Licensing and Regulation, Natural Resources, Agriculture, Corrections, Management and Budget, and Labor; the superintendent of public instruction, the state treasurer, the state personnel director, the executive director of the Department of Civil Rights, the attorney general, the secretary of state, and the chairperson of the State Housing Development Authority.