



**House  
Legislative  
Analysis  
Section**

Manufacturer's Bank Building, 12th Floor  
Lansing, Michigan 48909  
Phone: 517/373-6466

JUN 26 1990

**REQUIRE 4" ADDRESS NUMBERS ON NEW BLDGS.**

**House Bill 5660 (Substitute H-1)  
First Analysis (5-24-90)**

**Sponsor: Rep. Philip Hoffman  
Committee: State Affairs**

***THE APPARENT PROBLEM:***

Local fire departments and police agencies often find it difficult to locate homes when they are called for assistance in emergency situations. According to testimony, a fire increases one hundred percent during the first minute that it burns, and lives may be lost as ambulance drivers search for obscure or nonexistent address numbers. Some feel that legislation should be enacted to require visible house numbers on all buildings.

***THE CONTENT OF THE BILL:***

The bill would create a new act to require that address numbers on new buildings in the state be at least four inches high. The bill would apply to residential, commercial, or industrial structures or edifices, and would take effect 30 days after it was enacted.

***FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:***

Fiscal information is not available.

***ARGUMENTS:***

***For:***

The bill would provide a relatively simple and inexpensive solution to a significant problem that firefighters and police often face when trying to locate a building in an emergency. All buildings constructed in the future, whether residential, commercial, or industrial, should be easily identified.

***Against:***

The bill would only provide a partial solution to the problem. It is often older buildings that have no address numbers, while newer ones tend to have large numbers. In addition, although the bill would require that new buildings have four-inch address numbers before certificates of use and occupancy were issued, it contains no provision to assure that these address numbers remain in place. Buildings could have four-inch address numbers when constructed, and then be altered by paint or new trim in later years. The bill should be amended to require ALL buildings to display address numbers of sufficient size at all times.

***Against:***

At least one local fire department in the state has gone to the trouble of solving this problem at the local level by putting address numbers on local buildings. Instead of enacting into law a requirement that would require costly state inspection, other communities could solve the problem by enactment of local ordinances.

***POSITIONS:***

There are no positions on the bill. (5-23-90)

H.B. 5660 (5-24-90)