



**House
Legislative
Analysis
Section**

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PORTABLE TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES

House Bill 4746 with committee amendments
First Analysis (6-15-87)

Sponsor: Rep. Vincent J. Porreca
Committee: Transportation

THE APPARENT PROBLEM:

Construction operations, such as bridge repairs or wire repairs, often necessitate closing down one lane of traffic. When this procedure is undertaken in Michigan, flag-persons are sometimes employed at repair sites in order to direct traffic. On sites where projects are small and quick only one person may be used, but on large sites many people may be employed. However, it has been asserted that in instances in which repairs would be completed quickly costs may be saved if portable traffic lights were used.

THE CONTENT OF THE BILL:

The bill would amend the Michigan Vehicle Code to provide that portable, temporary traffic control devices could be placed on both sides of a highway in addition to or instead of stoplights in order to fulfill traffic safety requirements.

MCL 257.610A

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

The Department of Transportation estimates that the bill would have minimal if any fiscal implications to the state. (6-10-87)

ARGUMENTS:

For:

The bill is a smart cost-saving measure for the Department of Transportation and other agencies that perform road repairs because it saves the costs of having to pay a flag-person wages for quick repairs. In addition, portable stoplights may be even more desirable than flag-persons because they are more recognizable.

Against:

The bill would only allow portable stoplights to be used in place of regular stoplights. The purpose of the bill was to allow the portable lights to be substituted for flag-persons. Therefore, a technical amendment is necessary in order to fulfill the purpose for which the bill was originally drafted.

Against:

The use of a portable stoplight might result in the use of all sorts of different kinds of lights. The lights may not meet federal and state traffic safety requirements, and in addition they may not be as visible as normal stoplights as they may be placed in areas out of a driver's view.

Response: There are several portable traffic lights in use by the department and other agencies which meet both state and federal guidelines. In addition, all traffic control devices are approved by the department as a safeguard against poorly constructed lights.

POSITIONS:

The Michigan Road Builders Association support the bill. (6-12-87)

The Michigan Trucking Association support the bill. (6-12-87)

H.B. 4746 (6-15-87)