

Senate Fiscal Agency
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SFA**BILL ANALYSIS**

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House Bill 5289 (Substitute H-1 as reported without amendment)
Sponsor: Representative Ilona Varga
House Committee: Regulatory Affairs
Senate Committee: Local, Urban and State Affairs

Date Completed: 5-5-98

RATIONALE

The Emergency Telephone Service Enabling Act permits a county board of commissioners to establish an emergency telephone district within all or part of the county and to have a 9-1-1 service implemented within the district. A county board must appoint an emergency telephone district board, if it creates a consolidated dispatch within an emergency telephone district. (A consolidated district is a countywide or regional emergency dispatch service that provides dispatch service for at least 75% of the law enforcement, fire fighting, emergency medical service, and other emergency service agencies within the geographical area of a 9-1-1 service or serves 75% or more of the population within a 9-1-1 service district.) The membership of a board is determined by the county board of commissioners, but must include representatives of the county sheriff and the State Police. If a district consists of more than one county, the sheriff representative must be appointed by the president of the Michigan Sheriffs' Association. The Act also provides for an Emergency Telephone Service Committee within the Department of State Police to develop statewide standards and model system considerations, and to make other recommendations for emergency telephone services. The committee must consist of 17 members and include, among others, representatives of various police organizations and one representative of the Fire Chiefs Association.

The role of fire fighters has evolved so that their service is no longer confined to extinguishing fires. Fire fighters often are the first emergency personnel to appear on the scene of an accident where they must inform dispatchers about the accident and the types of emergency services needed. Fire fighters also may be the first responders at accident scenes that pose threats to

the environment, such as spills of toxic materials. Because of this changing role, fire fighters are considered an integral part of an emergency response system. Consequently, some people believe that a fire fighter should be included as a member of an emergency telephone district board and should be appointed to the State Emergency Telephone Service Committee.

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Emergency Telephone Service Enabling Act to require that a fire fighter be included on a county's emergency telephone district board; and to add the president of the Michigan State Firefighters Union, or his or her designated representative, to the Emergency Telephone Service Committee in the Department of State Police.

MCL 484.1320 & 484.1703

ARGUMENTS

(Please note: The arguments contained in this analysis originate from sources outside the Senate Fiscal Agency. The Senate Fiscal Agency neither supports nor opposes legislation.)

Supporting Argument

According to the Michigan Joint Fire Service Council, one-third to one-half of the emergency calls that come into 9-1-1 systems involve a fire department and require either a fire fighting or emergency medical service response. Fire fighters are playing a greater role than before as first responders to medical and environmental emergencies, as well as fighting fires. In addition, some local communities are considering combining their police and fire departments into a public safety department in which fire fighters and police are cross-trained to respond to an emergency in either

capacity. Thus, it is important that they share in representation on local boards and on the State Committee for Emergency Services. Since 9-1-1 dispatchers must coordinate services between law enforcement personnel, paramedics, and fire fighters, the fire fighters should be given an opportunity to have input into the operation of 9-1-1 emergency dispatch services.

Legislative Analyst: L. Arasim

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have a minimal fiscal impact on State and local government. Under the Act, committee members may receive expenses incurred in the performance of official duties.

Fiscal Analyst: B. Baker

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.