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BILL ANALYSIS



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Senate Bill 1198 (Substitute S-1 as reported by the Committee of the Whole)
Sponsor: Senator Martha G. Scott
Committee: Families and Human Services

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Social Welfare Act to require the Department of Human Services and the Department of Community Health to require all children participating in the supplemental food program for women, infants and children (the WIC program) to receive lead screening testing. Federal funds provided for administration of the WIC program could not be used to implement or administer the provisions of the bill.

(The WIC program is Federally funded and provides nutritional assistance to low-income women who are pregnant or have recently given birth, and to infants and children up to five years old who are determined to be at nutritional risk. The WIC program provides supplemental foods that are high in protein or specific vitamins and minerals, and offers nutritional education and counseling, among other services. In addition, the program provides immunization screening to all participants under the age of two.)

Proposed MCL 400.111I

Legislative Analyst: Curtis Walker

FISCAL IMPACT

There are about 300,000 children served by the WIC program in Michigan. The vast majority of these children are enrolled in the Medicaid program. Medicaid already requires lead screening testing, so at least 75% of these children are already receiving screening.

The basic screening involves a blood test that costs about \$10 to administer. If a positive result is found, then a second test, costing about \$50, is done. Thus, the total increase of costs due to the testing should be under \$1 million, all GF/GP. This cost should be mitigated because children enrolled in WIC are screened for other disorders, which means fewer blood samples would need to be taken.

Secondary effects would include follow-up treatment costs for children identified as positive, and potential lead abatement costs. There also would be secondary savings from successful treatment and lead abatement efforts. Both these costs and these savings would be of a much larger magnitude than the testing costs themselves, although the secondary costs and savings are difficult to quantify precisely.

Date Completed: 5-10-06

Fiscal Analyst: Steve Angelotti