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Senate Bill 340 (as introduced 3-5-09)
Sponsor: Senator Patricia L. Birkholz
Committee: Economic Development and Regulatory Reform

Date Completed: 8-26-09

CONTENT

The bill would create a new act to establish the Office of Business Ombudsman in the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC).

The Business Ombudsman would have to be appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. The person appointed to the position would have to have experience in creating jobs in the private sector. The Business Ombudsman would report directly to the president of the MEDC.

The Business Ombudsman would have to do all of the following:

- Assist in resolving disputes between private businesses and State agencies.
- Coordinate programs across government to create and retain business in Michigan.
- Aid and assist business development in Michigan.
- Work to create a business environment that encouraged and sustained entrepreneurship in Michigan.
- Work to empower entrepreneurs to take advantage of the opportunities the market offered in Michigan.
- Coordinate processing of permits and resolving disputes that involved multiple State agencies.

Legislative Analyst: Patrick Affholter

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have no fiscal impact on State or local government. Staff from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation have indicated that the MEDC has a full-time business ombudsman position funded from the MEDC's corporate revenue from Indian gaming at a salary of \$85,000 plus benefits. In addition, a portion of a second position serves as the Clean Air Ombudsman, supported by fee revenue from the Department of Environmental Quality of approximately \$40,000 per year.

Fiscal Analyst: Elizabeth Pratt
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