



Senate Fiscal Agency
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BILL ANALYSIS



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Senate Bill 918 (as introduced 3-21-18)
Sponsor: Senator Tom Casperson
Committee: Transportation

Date Completed: 6-5-18

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Unmanned Aircraft Systems Act to create the Unmanned Aircraft Systems Joint Program Office within the Michigan Department of Transportation and prescribe its duties.

Specifically, the Unmanned Aircraft Systems Joint Program Office would have to do the following:

- Provide advice to other departments and agencies of the State about the use of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) and related technology.
- Provide advice to the public about regulation of UAS by the Federal government, safe operating principles for UAS, restrictions on the use of UAS, and any other matters within the scope of the Office's authority.
- Provide education and information to departments and agencies of the State, political subdivisions, and the general public about UAS.
- Receive and consider comments from people in Michigan that were interested in or affected by the use of UAS.

The departments and agencies of the State would have to provide support to the Office as necessary and as requested for it to perform its duties. In addition to the Department of Transportation's provision of support, all of the following would have to provide primary support to the Office:

- The Department of State Police.
- The Department of Natural Resources.
- The Department of Corrections.
- The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.
- The Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs.

The bill would take effect 90 days after it was enacted.

MCL 259.303 et al.

Legislative Analyst: Drew Krogulecki

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have an indeterminate impact on the Department of Transportation, and to a lesser extent on the Departments of State Police, Natural Resources, Corrections, Agriculture and Rural Development, and Licensing and Regulatory Affairs. The bill would have no fiscal impact on local units of government.

The creation of the Unmanned Aerial Systems Joint Program Office was recommended in the final report (November 2017) of the Governor's Unmanned Aircraft Systems Task Force, along with 12 other recommendations. The Task Force recommended the creation of the office as a single point of contact for State agency use of unmanned aerial systems technology and also for inquiries from the general public. While the bill would do both of those things, it is not clear how much administrative support the office would require from the Department of Transportation, how big the office would be, if any new FTEs would be required, what expenses it would have, etc. The other named State Departments in the bill also would be required to provide support for the new office, but it is unclear what that would entail. For these reasons, the costs to the State for the office are indeterminate.

Fiscal Analyst: Michael Siracuse

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