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BILL ANALYSIS

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House Bill 5198 (Substitute H-1 as passed by the House)
Sponsor: Representative Sue Allor
House Committee: Natural Resources
Senate Committee: Natural Resources

Date Completed: 2-6-18

CONTENT

The bill would amend Part 515 (Prevention and Suppression of Forest Fires) of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to allow the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to provide assistance to and accept assistance from other states, the Federal government, and Canada in all hazard incidents.

The Act permits DNR to enter into agreements with other states and the Federal government to provide assistance and to accept assistance in the control of forest fires, including the training of personnel. Any employee of the DNR assigned to fire control duties or training programs outside Michigan must be considered the same as working inside the State for purposes of compensation and any other employee benefits.

Under the bill, the DNR could enter into agreements with other states, territories of the U.S., the Federal government, Canada, or provinces of Canada to provide assistance and to accept assistance in the control of forest fires and all hazard incidents, including the training of personnel. Any employee of the DNR assigned to fire control duties and all hazard incidents or training programs outside Michigan would have to be considered the same as working inside the State for purposes of compensation and any other employee benefits.

"All hazard incident" would mean an incident, whether natural or human-caused, that requires an organized response by a public, private, or governmental entity to protect life, public health or safety, or other values or to minimize any disruption of governmental, social, or economic services. One or more kinds of incident, such as fire, flood, mass casualty, search, rescue, or evacuation, could occur simultaneously as part of an all hazard incident.

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

MCL 324.51501 & 324.51514

Legislative Analyst: Nathan Leaman

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have a likely neutral fiscal impact on the DNR, and no fiscal impact on local units of government. The bill would allow the DNR to enter into agreements with other states, the Federal government, and Canada for response activities and training for response to all hazard incidents. This is permissive language so on its own it would result in no fiscal impact on the DNR. Assuming that the DNR entered into these agreements, the fiscal impact would be indeterminate. Typically, when the DNR enters into agreements with other states to assist with responding to forest fires, as current law permits, the agreements contain a provision

that allows the DNR to recoup its costs stemming from those response activities. Assuming that similar agreements made for all hazard incidents under the bill would contain similar cost-recovery provisions, the fiscal impact of the bill would be neutral.

Fiscal Analyst: Josh Sefton

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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.