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TOWNSHIP PARK COMMISSION

House Bill 5466 (Substitute H-2) First Analysis (12-2-98))

Sponsor: Rep. Barbara Dobb
Committee: Local Government

THE APPARENT PROBLEM:

Public Act 157 of 1905 provides for the creation of an elected township park commission of six members serving four-year terms. In at least one community -- West Bloomfield -- the commission reportedly has been evenly split and deadlocked. According to press accounts, commission members have sometimes not even been able to agree on an agenda. Legislation has been introduced that would provide for an odd number of members on township park commissions.

THE CONTENT OF THE BILL:

The bill would amend Public Act 157 of 1905 so that an elected township park commission would have an odd number of members as determined by the township board, but not fewer than five. The township board, on or after the effective date of the bill, would increase or decrease the number of members on the commission. If the number was increased, the township board would appoint the additional member or members, who would serve until the next election. If the number was decreased, the commission members then serving would remain in office until the next election. The bill also would provide that a vacancy on a township park commission would be filled by appointment of the township board for the unexpired portion of the term.

MCL 41.426

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

There is no information at present.

ARGUMENTS:

For:

A township park commission with an odd number of members is less likely to become deadlocked or stalemated, and thus more likely to be able to carry

out its responsibilities, than an even-numbered commission. Currently such boards have six elected

members and, in at least one case, deadlock has repeatedly occurred.

POSITIONS:

The Michigan Townships Association has indicated support for the bill. (12-1-98)

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Analyst: C. Couch

■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.