



**House
Legislative
Analysis
Section**

Olds Plaza Building, 10th Floor
Lansing, Michigan 48909
Phone: 517/373-6466

STATE SONG, ANTHEM

**House Bill 4002 (Substitute H-1)
Revised First Analysis (5-11-94)**

**Sponsor: Rep. Kirk A. Profit
Committee: State Affairs**

THE APPARENT PROBLEM:

Since the time Michigan became a state in 1837, it has adopted various objects, animals, and plants to serve as official state symbols. Michigan has a state flower (the apple blossom), a state bird (the robin), a state tree (the white pine), a state fish (the brook trout), a state stone (the Petoskey Stone), a state gem (chlorastrolite, or the "Isle Royale Greenstone"), and even a state soil (the Kalkaska soil series). Despite a number of proposals in the past, however, Michigan does not have an official state song. Legislation to adopt an official state song and state anthem and march has been introduced.

THE CONTENT OF THE BILL:

The bill would create a law adopting "Michigan, My Michigan," by Douglas Malloch and W. Otto Meissner, as the official state song, and "Michigan, the Water Wonderland," by Phil Haddrill, as the official state anthem and march.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Over the years, a number of bills have been introduced that would have adopted an official state song. For example, since the 1979-80 legislative session, there have been at least 18 bills proposing at least 12 songs as the official state song, including:

- * "Water Wonderland" (HBs 5228 and 5831 and SB 113 of 1979, SB 775 of 1981, HB 5231 of 1985, and HB 5184 of 1991),
- * "Our Water Wonderland" (HB 5805 of 1979 and HB 5700 of 1985),
- * "My Michigan" (SB 1151 of 1979),
- * "Michigan My Homeland" (HB 5274 of 1983),
- * "Michigan People" (HB 5548 of 1985),

- * "Michigan (The Best You've Ever Been)" (HB 4672 of 1987),
- * "Michigan, The Water Wonderland" (HB 4949 of 1987),
- * "Apple Blossom Time" (SB 591 of 1987),
- * "Two Peninsulas, One People" (SB 467 of 1991 and SB 1063 of 1993),
- * "The Michigan Anthem" (HB 5075 of 1991), and
- * "Michigan, My Michigan" (HB 4732 of 1991 and HB 4002 of 1993).

"Michigan, My Michigan," with words and music by Douglas Malloch and W. Otto Meissner, has the following lyrics:

A song to thee, fair State of mine,
Michigan, my Michigan;
But greater song than this is thine,
Michigan, my Michigan;
The whisper of the forest tree,
the thunder of the inland sea,
Unite in one grand symphony,
of Michigan, my Michigan.

I sing a State of all the best,
Michigan, my Michigan;
I sing a state with riches blessed,
Michigan, my Michigan;
Thy mines unmask a hidden store,
But richer thy historic lore,
More great the love thy builders bore,
Oh Michigan, my Michigan.
How fair the bosom of thy lakes,
Michigan, my Michigan;
What melody each river makes,
Michigan, my Michigan;
As to thy lakes thy rivers tend,

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Thy exiled children to thee send
Devotion that shall never end,

Oh, Michigan, my Michigan.
Thou rich in wealth that makes a State,
Michigan, my Michigan;
Thou great in things that makes us great,
Michigan, my Michigan;
Our loyal voices sound thy claim,
Upon the golden roll of Fame
Our loyal hands shall write the name
Oh, Michigan, my Michigan.

"Michigan, the Water Wonderland," by Philip Haddrill, has the following lyrics:

Michigan, the Water Wonderland,
Land of inspiring splendor!
Michigan, the Water Wonderland,
Nature has blest with scenic grandeur.
If you seek a pleasant homeland,
Look about you at the wonderland in Michigan,
Great State of Michigan,
The grand and glorious Water Wonderland!
Michigan, the Winter Wonderland,
Wondrous in frosty radiance!
Michigan, the Winter Wonderland,
Forest and field in white resplendence.
First in winter recreation,
Minds and bodies finding stimulation.
Michigan, delightful Michigan,
The grand and glorious Winter Wonderland.
Michigan, the Water Wonderland,
Greatness in ways unending!
Michigan, the Water Wonderland,
Progress thru Man and Nature blending.
Industry and Education, Agriculture and Vacation,
Fun means Michigan, dynamic Michigan,
The glorious Water-Winter Wonderland!

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

Fiscal information is not available. (5-2-94)

ARGUMENTS:

For:

Michigan reportedly is only one of three states (the other two being New York and New Jersey) that does not have a state song. Michigan deserves to have an official song that not only would enhance the pride of its residents, but also would bring credit to the state. With Michigan week coming up this

month (May), it would be particularly appropriate to adopt a song in time to be used during this commemorative week.

For:

Reportedly, "Michigan, My Michigan" has been taught in many public schools for decades as the state song of Michigan, and it is so noted in a number of reference works, including The World Book Encyclopedia, The New Book of Knowledge, Funk and Wagnall's New Encyclopedia, The Academic American Encyclopedia (which is carried by the Prodigy Computer Service), and The Encyclopedia Americana. The group of third-graders who requested that the song be adopted as the official state song have received many letters and telephone calls testifying that people in their eighties on down to their twenties have been taught -- and consider -- this to be their state song. Moreover, the song, which was written by professionals in 1910, now is in the public domain, so it can be copied without payment of royalties or other legal complications.

As proponents of the song point out, its lyrics capture the essence of Michigan -- it forests, its lakes and rivers, its mines, and its rich history -- while echoing the state motto ("If you seek pleasant peninsulas, look around you"). It instills and evokes vivid images, while creating strong emotional pride in Michigan. It also evokes the unity of the state's two peninsulas, its varied resources and ethnic and racial populations, and echoes the state's Great Seal ("from many, one"). The song has withstood the test of time, and it is long past time that it be recognized as the official state song.

For:

The bill proposing "Michigan, the Water Wonderland," by Phil Haddrill, as the official state song was approved by the Michigan House of Representatives by a vote of 81 to 16, after being reported out of the House State Affairs Committee on a unanimous vote. However, it never was reported out of the Senate State Affairs Committee, and died in that committee.

This song reportedly was selected by the Michigan Federation of Music Clubs as the right song for Michigan, and has three versatile settings: song, march, and scenario. As a song, it has three verses commemorating Michigan's natural splendor, its winter features, and its achievements. The march version of the song is a quick-step version, well

suited to parade and concert performances. And the "scenario," or longer setting of musical themes, could be used to support a narration of Michigan highlights, as a climax to a program, or as a way of presenting Michigan to visiting delegations. There also are a variety of vocal and instrumental combinations available for each of these three settings.

Against:

Given the number of songs that have been candidates for the official state song over the years by various people and groups, it seems rather arbitrary to pick the two songs proposed by the bill. Moreover, as recently as the last legislative session (1991-1992), for example, the Michigan Senate approved a song -- "Two Peninsulas, One People," by Norman A. Davies and Charlotte Moore-Viculin -- as the official state song, but the bill (Senate Bill 467) died in the House State Affairs Committee. In the past, the House of Representatives has approved one song, only to have the bill die in the Senate, while the Senate approved another song, only to have that bill die in the House. A fairer, more objective way to choose an official state song might be through a state-wide competition judged by professionals qualified to evaluate lyrics and musical scores.

Against:

It would be more appropriate -- and less expensive -
- to have an official state song designated by resolution rather than by law.

Against:

It seems confusing to have both an official state song and an official "anthem and march". There also would seem to be some question of copyright issues, since the song being proposed for the state anthem and march has a 1972 copyright date. For the sake of simplicity and clarity, a single song should be chosen to symbolize the state.

Response:

Michigan has both an official state stone (the Petoskey stone) and an official state gemstone (chlorastrolite, or the "Isle Royale Greenstone"). Having an official state song as well as an official state anthem and march shouldn't be any different than having an official state stone and gem.

POSITIONS:

There are no positions on the bill. (5-2-94)