



LIBRARY MILLAGES

**House Bill 4444 (Substitute H-2)
First Analysis (4-27-93)**

**Sponsor: Rep. Mary Schroer
Committee: Taxation**

THE APPARENT PROBLEM:

Under Public Act 164 of 1877, cities, villages, and townships can levy up to two mills with the approval of voters to support free public libraries. The limit was increased to two mills from one mill (after 109 years) in 1986. The act was amended then to say that libraries existing at the time could increase their tax rate within the new two mill limit by a vote of the people subsequent to a resolution by the library board that the new revenue was necessary. The provision as written, library advocates note, prevents a library established after 1986 from putting a millage increase before voters. There appears no good reason for this. Also, the act does not specify the duration of a library tax or how such a tax, if of limited duration, could be renewed.

THE CONTENT OF THE BILL:

The bill would amend Public Act of 1877 to do the following:

- permit the millage rate for libraries, no matter when established, to be increased by a vote of the people, subject to the two-mill limit;
- specify that a library tax could be approved for an unlimited duration or for a specific number of years;
- allow a library millage to be renewed (or increased) for an unlimited duration or for a specific number of years; and
- validate the renewal of any library millage accomplished before the effective date of this bill (if renewed in the manner prescribed by the bill).

MCL 397.210 et al.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

There is no information at present.

ARGUMENTS:

For:

The bill would maintain the intent of Public Act 164 of 1877, which allows for a tax of up to two mills for free public libraries in cities, villages, and townships while clarifying some aspects of the act. (This is one of many acts that allows for the establishment and maintenance of libraries.) The bill would make it clear that libraries organized under the act could, with voter approval, increase their millages up to the statutory limit, could have millages of unlimited or specific duration, and could renew millages. The act as currently written does not clearly spell this out.

POSITIONS:

The Michigan Library Association supports the bill. (4-22-93)

A representative of the Northfield Township Library testified in favor of the bill. (4-21-93)

House Bill 4444 (4-27-93)