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BILL ANALYSIS

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Senate Bill 1053 (as reported with amendments)
Sponsor: Senator Michael J. Bouchard
Committee: Financial Services

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Metropolitan Council Act to provide for the creation of a metropolitan region council in an area with a population over 1,500,000, and prescribe its powers and duties, including the authority to levy a voter-approved property tax and to fund arts and cultural facilities and programs.

Currently, a combination of two or more local units of government in a "metropolitan area" (a metropolitan statistical area as defined by the U.S. Commerce Department), with a population under 1 million may form a metropolitan council. The bill provides instead that any of the following could form a metropolitan council: a city with at least 900,000 people; a county with at least 700,000 people; a combination of any local units of government in the same metropolitan region as a city with at least 900,000 people and a county with at least 700,000 people; or a combination of two or more local units in a metropolitan area with a total population under 1,500,000. In an area with a population under 1,500,000, the council would be a "metropolitan area" council. The council would be a "metropolitan region" council in an area with a population over 1,500,000.

A metropolitan *area* council would have the powers and duties currently prescribed for a metropolitan council. A metropolitan *region* council could provide funding, supplemental to funding received from other sources, for arts and cultural "facilities and programs" located within the metropolitan region that the council served, and provided by a tax-exempt entity. "Facilities and programs" could include zoological, botanical, or other science centers, a public broadcast station, museums or historical centers, performing arts centers, orchestras, choruses, chorales, opera theaters, and ballet, dance, and theater companies; they would not include labor organizations, political organizations, libraries, or public, private, or charter schools.

The Act permits a metropolitan council, with voter approval, to levy .5 mill on all taxable real and personal property within a council area. The bill provides that a proposal for a tax to be levied by a metropolitan region council could not be placed on the ballot unless it were adopted by a resolution and certified by the council within 70 days before the election. A tax levy could not be authorized for a metropolitan region unless a majority of the votes cast in each participating county and city favored the proposal.

MCL 124.653 et al. Legislative Analyst: G. Towne

FISCAL IMPACT

Local units in a metropolitan statistical area with a population between 1,000,000 and 1,500,000 people that established a metropolitan area council could levy up to 0.5 mill if authorized by the majority of the votes cast in the area. Local units in a metropolitan statistical area with a population of more than 1,500,000 people that established a metropolitan region council could levy up to 0.5 mill if authorized by the majority of the votes cast in each participating county or city. If approved by the metropolitan area or region council's board of directors, the council could be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of its official duties.

Date Completed: 5-31-96 Fiscal Analyst: R. Ross

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