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Senate Bill 109 (as introduced 2-8-11)
Sponsor: Senator Rick Jones
Committee: Families, Seniors, and Human Services

Date Completed: 3-2-11

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Social Welfare Act to require the Department of Human Services (DHS) to work with the Department of Technology, Management, and Budget, and providers of automatic teller machine (ATM) services, to create and implement a program or method of blocking access to cash benefits from Michigan Bridge Cards at ATMs located in casinos or casino enterprises.

If the DHS required a Federal waiver to implement these provisions, the Department would have to apply for that waiver immediately upon the bill's enactment.

"Casino" and "casino enterprise" would mean those terms as defined in the Michigan Gaming Control and Revenue Act. (That Act defines "casino" as a building in which gaming is conducted. "Casino enterprise" means the buildings, facilities, or rooms functionally or physically connected to a casino, including any bar, restaurant, hotel, retail establishment, or arena or any other facility located in a city under the control of a casino licensee or affiliated company.)

Proposed MCL 400.57v

BACKGROUND

The Michigan Bridge Card is a debit card used to deliver food benefits and cash benefits. The DHS issues the card, rather than paper food stamps or paper checks, to eligible individuals, and makes deposits to their accounts twice monthly. Recipients can use the card at a store point-of-sale machine to buy food with food or cash benefits; to buy nonfood items with cash benefits; to withdraw cash from cash benefits; or to get cash back with a purchase. Recipients also can use the card at an ATM to withdraw cash benefits.

According to the DHS website, approximately 4,400 retailers and over 4,000 ATMs are available for Bridge Card use within the State.

Legislative Analyst: Patrick Affholter

FISCAL IMPACT

According to the Department of Human Services, the cost to implement a program that would block access to cash benefits at ATM casinos would be minimal. The actual cost would, in part, depend on the State's success in obtaining the information needed to correctly program the ATMs. The bill would have no fiscal impact on local governments.

Fiscal Analyst: Frances Carley

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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.