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**MACKINAC BRIDGE AUTHORITY
TOLL & ANNUAL APPROPRIATION**

House Bill 4627

Sponsor: Rep. Tom Casperson

House Bills 4628 and 4630

Sponsor: Rep. Rich Brown

House Bills 4629 and 4631

Sponsor: Rep. Scott Shackleton

Committee: Transportation

Complete to 5-15-03

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILLS 4627-4631 AS INTRODUCED 5-6-03

The bills would amend various acts to set the toll for the Mackinac Bridge, provide funding for the Mackinac Bridge Authority, and to extend the corporate existence of the authority.

House Bill 4627 would amend the Mackinac Bridge Authority Act (MCL 254.317) to specify that beginning with the fiscal year that starts October 1, 2003 and continuing through the fiscal year that starts October 1, 2007, the amounts charged for tolls, fees, rents, and charges levied by the Mackinac Bridge Authority could not exceed the amounts levied in the fiscal year that ended September 30, 2002.

Further, the bill specifies that as of March 1, 2003, all advances made by the state to the authority pursuant to sections 161 and 163 of the Motor Fuel Tax Act, would be considered repaid or forgiven.

Finally, the bill would extend the life of the authority by deleting language in the law that says when the cost of the bridge, including all principal and interest on the bonds issued, and all advances made, have been fully paid from tolls, fees, rents, rates, and charges, then these collections for the use of the bridge are to cease and the bridge is to be maintained and operated by the state as a free bridge. House Bill 4628 would delete similar language from section 163 of the Motor Fuel Tax Act (MCL 207.1163) regarding the reimbursement of sums advanced under that act and under section 7 of the Mackinac Bridge Authority Act.

House Bill 4629 would amend the Mackinac Bridge Authority Act (MCL 254.312) to specify that after the bridge authority's liabilities had been met, the authority could continue to assess a toll, but the amount of the toll could not exceed the amount assessed on January 1, 2003.

Further, the law currently specifies that the corporate existence of the bridge authority is to continue until all of its liabilities have been met and its bonds, including refunding bonds, have been paid in full or otherwise discharged. Then, all rights and properties of the authority are to pass to, and be vested in, the state. House Bill 4629 would ensure that the authority would continue, by deleting the provision of the law that says "when all such liabilities and bonds have

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been discharged in full, all rights and properties of the authority shall pass to and be vested in the state.” House Bill 4629 is tie-barred to House Bill 4627, meaning that it could not take effect unless House Bill 4627 was also enacted.

House Bill 4630 would amend the Mackinac Bridge Authority Act (MCL 254.322) to prohibit the Mackinac Bridge Authority from charging tolls or charges to authorized emergency vehicles that were in the process of responding to an emergency. That prohibition would begin on July 1, 2003. Under the bill, “authorized emergency vehicles” means that term as it is defined in section 2 of the Michigan Vehicle Code.” [The Vehicle Code defines “authorized emergency vehicle” to mean either of the following: (a) vehicles of the fire department, police vehicles, ambulances, or privately owned motor vehicles of volunteer or paid fire fighters if authorized by the chief of an organized fire department, or privately owned motor vehicles of volunteer or paid members of a life support agency licensed by the Department of Consumer and Industry Services if authorized by the life support agency; (b) for purposes of section 698(5)(c), during an emergency, a vehicle owned and operated by a federally recognized nonprofit charitable organization that is used exclusively for assistance during that emergency.

House Bill 4631 would amend the Michigan Transportation Fund Act (MCL 247.661) to require that at least \$5.25 million be appropriated annually from the state trunk line fund to the Mackinac Bridge Authority, beginning with the fiscal year starting October 1, 2003, to be used to reduce the toll charged.

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Analyst: J. Hunault

■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.