

**SPECIALTY LICENSE PLATES FOR
ATHLETIC TEAMS**

House Bill 5139
Sponsor: Rep. Tupac Hunter
Committee: Transportation

Complete to 10-27-03

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILL 5139 AS INTRODUCED 10-7-03

House Bill 5139 would amend the Michigan Vehicle Code to provide for specialty license plates for professional athletic teams, and earmark the revenue for youth athletic programs. The program would be repealed September 30, 2005.

Under the bill, the secretary of state would design, develop and issue a state-sponsored professional sports team fund-raising registration plate, and a matching collector plate. The plates would include the logo of one of the following professional sports teams: Detroit Red Wings, Detroit Lions, Detroit Pistons, Detroit Shock, Detroit Fury, or Detroit Tigers.

The bill specifies that a professional sports team that entered into a written agreement with the secretary of state for the development of the specialty plate would agree that the service fees derived from the sale of the plates bearing its logo would be deposited into the Professional Sports Team Fund to be created in the state treasury. Revenue from the sales would be disbursed to one or more youth sports programs in the state that were engaged in the same sport as the professional sports team. The service fees collected would be segregated by the secretary of state into a separate account. Then the secretary would transfer the balance of the fees, on a quarterly basis, to the state treasurer who would credit the fee money to the sports team fund.

Under the bill, the Professional Sports Team Fund created in the state treasury would be administered by the state treasurer who would receive money or other assets from any sources for deposit into the fund, direct the investment of the fund, and credit to the fund the interest and earnings from investments. Money in the fund at the close of the fiscal year would not lapse to the general fund.

The bill would require that the Department of Treasury disburse money in the fund on a quarterly basis as follows;

- from the money received from the sale of Detroit Red Wings logo registration plates, 50 percent to the Michigan Amateur Hockey Association, and 50 percent to the Little Caesars Amateur Hockey League;
- from the money received from the sale of Detroit Lions logo plates, 50 percent to the Detroit Police Athletic League to support the football program, and 50 percent to Southeastern Michigan Pop Warner football;

- from money received from the sale of Detroit Fury logo plates, 50 percent to the Detroit Police Athletic League to support the football program, and 50 percent to Southeaster Michigan Pop Warner football;

- from money received from the sale of Detroit Piston logo plates, 75 percent to the Michigan Amateur Athletic Union, and 25 percent to the Detroit Neighborhood Basketball Program to support boys' basketball programs;

- from money received from the sale of Detroit Shock logo plates, 75 percent, on a quarterly basis, to the Michigan Amateur Athletic Union, and 25 percent to the Detroit Neighborhood Basketball Program to support girls' basketball programs;

- from the money received from the sale of Detroit Tiger logo plates, 100 percent, on a quarterly basis, to the Michigan Youth Baseball Association.

The bill would require that the organizations receiving money under this program use it to purchase equipment or uniforms, or to pay the costs of athletics facilities' improvements, training of athletes, or conducting sports camps.

Currently under the law, the Office of the Secretary of State may, at any one time, develop not more than seven state-sponsored fund-raising registration plates and matching collector plates, as well as plates for the state's 15 public universities. House Bill 5139 would remove the limit of seven state-sponsored plates. Further, the bill would require that a professional sports team enter into a written agreement with the secretary of state, in the same manner as do participating universities, to grant a non-exclusive worldwide license to use the team's designs, trade names, trademarks, emblems, symbols, or images in conjunction with the marketing, promotion, sale, or copyrights of the registration plates; and to grant the authority to merchandise the registration plates or an image of the plate.

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