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BILL ANALYSIS

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Senate Bill 225 (Substitute S-2 as reported by the Committee of the Whole)
Sponsor: Senator Cameron S. Brown
Committee: Agriculture, Forestry and Tourism

CONTENT

The bill would create a new act to establish the "Agricultural Tourism Zoning Advisory Commission" and require it to report to the Governor and the Legislature on issues concerning agricultural tourism. The bill would be repealed one year and 90 days after its effective date.

The bill would define "agricultural tourism" as the practice of visiting an agribusiness, horticultural, or agricultural operation, including a farm or winery or a companion animal or livestock show, for the purpose of recreation, education, or active involvement in the operation, other than as a contractor or employee of the operation.

The Commission would be created within the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) and would consist of the following members appointed by the MDA Director: three individuals representing agricultural tourism enterprises; two individuals representing local government; one individual representing the Travel Michigan division of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation; and one individual representing the MDA. Commission members would have to serve without compensation but could be reimbursed for their actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their official duties.

Within one year and 60 days after the bill's effective date, the Commission would have to submit a report to the Governor and the legislative committees with primary responsibility for agriculture issues, tourism issues, and local zoning issues, on all of the following:

- A discussion of the effects of local zoning on agricultural tourism.
- Model local zoning ordinance provisions to promote and remove barriers to agricultural tourism.
- Recommendations concerning the use of logo signage to promote agricultural tourism.
- Other recommendations concerning agricultural tourism.

The Commission would have to undertake studies for the purposes of the report.

Legislative Analyst: Suzanne Lowe

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill could result in increased State costs associated with the provision permitting reimbursement of Commission members' expenses. These costs would be covered by existing appropriations.

Date Completed: 4-21-05

Fiscal Analyst: Craig Thiel

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Analysis available @ <http://www.michiganlegislature.org>

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.