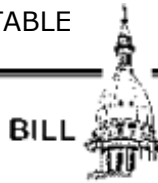




Senate Fiscal Agency  
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BILL ANALYSIS

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Senate Bill 226 (Substitute S-2 as reported by the Committee of the Whole)  
Sponsor: Senator Jud Gilbert, II  
Committee: Agriculture, Forestry and Tourism

### **CONTENT**

The bill would create Part 23 (Agriculture and the Environment) of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to require the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to convene an agriculture and rural communities roundtable to discuss how the laws, rules, and policies administered by the DEQ affect farmers, food processors, agribusiness, and rural communities (counties with a population under 70,000).

After consulting with the chairpersons of the Senate and House standing committees concerned with agriculture, the DEQ Director would have to invite at least all of the following to participate in the roundtable: two individuals from an association representing farmers; two from an association representing food processors; two from an association representing agribusiness; and one individual from an association representing local units of government in rural areas.

The Director would have to convene the first roundtable meeting within 90 days after the bill's effective date, and would have to convene the roundtable at least twice each year. The meetings would have to be open to the general public and held in a place available to the public. The DEQ would have to give notice of each meeting by posting on the Department website and other means it determined necessary. At least one meeting each year would have to be held in a rural community.

The DEQ would have to prepare a summary of each meeting and include a Department response to issues raised during the meeting. The DEQ would have to post the summary on its website and provide a copy to members of the roundtable, to any member of the public requesting a copy, and to the Senate and House standing committees.

Proposed MCL 324.2301-324.2305

Legislative Analyst: Suzanne Lowe

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The bill would result in indeterminate costs to the State for Department staff and resources dedicated to convening the roundtable meetings and preparing summaries of them.

Date Completed: 4-19-05

Fiscal Analyst: Jessica Runnels