

# Legislative Analysis



## **POLICE OFFICER'S AND FIRE FIGHTER'S SURVIVOR TUITION PROGRAM REVISIONS**

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**House Bill 5873 (H-3) as amended**

**Sponsor: Rep. Forlini**

**Committee: Appropriations**

**Complete to 9-20-12**

### **A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILL 5873 AS PASSED BY THE HOUSE**

The Police Officer's and Fire Fighter's Survivor Tuition Act provides the waiver of tuition at state public institutions of higher education (universities and community colleges) for children and surviving spouses of Michigan police officers and firefighters killed in the line of duty who are pursuing an undergraduate degree or certificate. Students must be the spouse or the natural or adopted child of a deceased officer or firefighter. Children must be under the age of 21 at the time of the death; and must also apply for the first time before the age of 21.

House Bill 5873 would amend the act to raise the cut-off age to 26, move administrative responsibility for the program from the Department of State Police to the Department of Treasury ("department" hereafter), and make a series of technical or clarifying revisions to the statute. Those revisions include:

- Replacing the term "waiver" with "grant" throughout the act and requiring the Department of Treasury to provide the grant, rather than requiring state institutions of higher education to waive tuition.
- Adding definitions for "academic year," "eligible student," "eligible tuition," "survivor's tuition grant," and "undergraduate class."
- Requiring state institutions of higher education to certify information regarding student financial needs and tuition rates (which may not exceed the institution's rate for resident students) to the department.
- Providing for the department to submit evidence, provided by an applicant that he or she is eligible for the program, to the Department of State Police for a determination of whether the Michigan police officer's or fire fighter's death was the direct and proximate result of a traumatic injury incurred in the line of duty.
- Requiring the department to carry out various tasks related to the administration of the program.

### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

The bill would have an indeterminate, but small, fiscal impact on state government. Administrative responsibility has already been shifted from the Department of State

Police to the Department of Treasury, in conjunction with moving the appropriation for the program from the State Police budget to the Higher Education budget in FY 2010-11. Expanding program eligibility by raising the cut-off age for qualifying students to participate could result in a small increase in state expenditures. In FY 2010-11, under current statutory provisions, five eligible students received financial assistance through the program totaling \$38,811.<sup>1</sup>

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■ 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.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.michigan.gov/mistudentaid/0,4636,7-128-60969\\_61016-274569--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mistudentaid/0,4636,7-128-60969_61016-274569--,00.html)