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BILL ANALYSIS

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Senate Bill 994 (as introduced 5-25-16)
Sponsor: Senator Tom Casperson
Committee: Transportation

Date Completed: 5-25-16

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Aeronautics Code to do the following:

- **Create the Unmanned Aircraft Systems Task Force to develop statewide policy recommendations on the operation, use, and regulation of unmanned aircraft systems in Michigan.**
- **Provide for the composition of the Task Force, and require the Governor to appoint its members within 90 days after the bill's effective date.**
- **Require the Task Force, within three months after its first meeting, to submit a report with recommendations to the Governor and the standing committees in the House and Senate that deal with transportation issues.**
- **Provide that the members' terms would be until the report was submitted.**

The bill would define "unmanned aircraft system" as an unmanned aircraft and associated elements, including communication links and the components that control the unmanned aircraft, that are required for the pilot in command to operate safely and efficiently in the national airspace system.

The bill would create the Unmanned Aircraft Systems Task Force to develop statewide policy recommendations on the operation, use, and regulation of unmanned aircraft systems in Michigan.

Within 90 days after the bill's effective date, the Governor would have to appoint members of the Task Force. The individuals appointed would have to include one member from each of the following agencies or interest groups:

- A member from the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Bureau of Aeronautics nominated by the MDOT Director.
- A member from the division of MDOT that performs bridge inspections and road work, nominated by the MDOT Director.
- A member from the Department of State Police, nominated by the Director of the Department.
- A member from the Department of Natural Resources, nominated by the Department Director.
- A member from the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, nominated by the Department Director.
- A member from the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs, nominated by the Department Director.
- An unmanned aircraft systems technical commercial representative.
- An unmanned aircraft systems manufacturing industry representative.

- A member who is licensed by the Federal Aviation Administration to operate a small unmanned aircraft system (an unmanned aircraft weighing less than 55 pounds).
- A member of a statewide agricultural association, nominated by the president of the association.
- A member of a statewide retail association, nominated by the president of the association.
- A member of a statewide manufacturing trade association, nominated by the president or chief executive officer of the association.
- A member of a statewide property and casualty insurance association, nominated by the president or chief executive officer of the association.
- A member of a statewide association that represents real estate brokers licensed in Michigan, nominated by the president of the association.
- A member of a statewide surveying association, nominated by the president of the association.
- A law enforcement official from a municipality, nominated by a statewide police chiefs association.
- A member of a statewide freight railroad association, nominated by the president of that association.
- A member of a statewide broadcasters association, nominated by the president of the association.

Nominations to the Task Force would have to be submitted to the Governor within 60 days after the effective date of the bill. The Governor would have to make the appointments within 30 days after the close of nominations. The terms of the appointments would be until the Task Force submitted its report with recommendations. The member from MDOT would have to chair the Task Force and serve as a liaison to the Governor and the standing committees in the House and Senate that mainly deal with transportation issues. The Task Force would have to meet as necessary to complete its duties. Meetings of the Task Force would have to be held in the central part of Michigan. The members of the Task Force could not receive compensation for serving.

The Task Force would be subject to the Open Meetings Act and the Freedom of Information Act.

The Task Force would have to consider commercial and private uses of unmanned aircraft systems, landowner and privacy rights, as well as general rules and regulations for safe operation of unmanned aircraft systems, and prepare comprehensive recommendations for the safe and lawful operation of unmanned aircraft systems in Michigan.

The Task Force would have to submit a report with recommendations to the Governor and the standing committees in the House and Senate that mainly deal with transportation issues within three months after the first meeting.

The bill would take effect 90 days after its enactment.

The bill is tie-barred to Senate Bill 432, which would amend the Aeronautics Code to prohibit an authorized individual from operating a drone within 1,000 feet of the Mackinac Bridge.

MCL 259.8 et al.

Legislative Analyst: Drew Krogulecki

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have no fiscal impact on State or local government.

Fiscal Analyst: David Zin

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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.