

Legislative Analysis



REQUIRE CONSERVATION OFFICERS TO WEAR BODY CAMS

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<http://www.house.mi.gov/hfa>

House Bill 4969 as introduced
Sponsor: Rep. Beau Matthew LaFave
Committee: Military, Veterans and Homeland Security
Revised 10-8-21

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

SUMMARY:

House Bill 4969 would amend 1986 PA 109, which prescribes certain powers and duties of conservation officers, to require conservation officers to wear a body-worn camera while exercising their duties as conservation officers.

Currently under the act, conservation officers are appointed by the director of the Department of Natural Resources and are trained and certified as peace officers under the Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards (MCOLES) Act. Conservation officers have the same power to serve criminal process and require aid in executing criminal process as sheriffs.

Beginning on the effective date of the bill, a conservation officer would be required to wear a **body-worn camera** while exercising his or her duties as a conservation officer. The disclosure of an audio or video recording recorded by the camera would be subject to the Law Enforcement Body-Worn Camera Privacy Act.¹

Body-worn camera would mean a device that is worn by a law enforcement officer that electronically records audio and video of his or her activities.²

Proposed MCL 300.21a

FISCAL IMPACT:

House Bill 4969 does not provide the Department of Natural Resources with funding for the body-worn cameras mandated by the bill; consequently, the bill may result in increased equipment costs for the department. The extent of this potential cost increase is unclear and likely to vary with the specific camera or cameras deployed for use by conservation officers. Existing appropriations may cover these costs in the absence of dedicated funding; the department's General Law Enforcement appropriation is \$45.8 million Gross for FY 2021-22.

The bill is unlikely to directly affect department revenues or costs or revenues for local governments.

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House Fiscal Agency staff for use by House members in their deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.

¹ <https://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/mcl/pdf/mcl-Act-85-of-2017.pdf>

² Defined in the Law Enforcement Body-Worn Camera Privacy Act: <http://legislature.mi.gov/doc.aspx?mcl-780-312>