

Legislative Analysis



PRESS RIGHTS IN PUBLICLY-FINANCED SPORTS FACILITIES

Mitchell Bean, Director
Phone: (517) 373-8080
<http://www.house.mi.gov/hfa>

House Bill 6465

Sponsor: Rep. Leon Drolet

Committee: Government Operations

Complete to 9-18-06

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILL 6465 AS INTRODUCED 9-12-06

In general, the bill is designed to protect the right of members of the press to take photos or film video from the sidelines at sporting events in publicly-financed sports facilities.

The bill would amend the law governing sports stadiums and conference facilities, Public Act 180 of 1991, to add a new provision pertaining to entities owning, operating, or leasing a sports stadium for which 20 percent or more of the *construction* costs of the stadium were derived from state or local taxes. **Such an entity would be barred from prohibiting members of the press from reasonable access to the sidelines of the playing area to obtain photographic or video coverage of a sporting event open to the public.** On the other hand, the owner, leaseholder, or operator of the facility would still be able to enforce reasonable rules to preserve health, safety, and orderly use of the facility and comply with existing contracts.

The bill creates a cause of action for members of the press who are wrongly denied access to the sidelines to sue for injunctions, actual damages, costs, and attorney fees.

MCL 207.757a

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bill would have no cost to the state but could result in costs to counties if there are additional lawsuits resulting from the bill.

Legislative Analyst: Shannan Kane

Fiscal Analyst: Robin Risko

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