

HOUSE BILL No. 5392

November 1, 2005, Introduced by Reps. Kolb, Spade, Accavitti, Tobocman, Cushingberry, Plakas, Kathleen Law, Bieda, Gillard, Brown, Meisner, Sheltroun and Sak and referred to the Committee on Energy and Technology.

A bill to establish an accessible electronic information service program for blind and disabled individuals; to prescribe the powers and duties of certain departments, commissions, and telecommunications providers in relation to that program; and to impose a surcharge on telecommunications access lines.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:

1 Sec. 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the
2 "accessible electronic information act".

3 Sec. 3. As used in this act:

4 (a) "Accessible electronic information" means news and other
5 timely information, including newspapers, delivered through high-
6 speed computers and telecommunication technology in a form
7 appropriate for use by blind and disabled individuals.

8 (b) "Blind and disabled individuals" means those individuals

1 who meet the eligibility requirements for library loan services
2 under former 36 CFR 701.10(b) (2003).

3 (c) "Department" means the department of labor and economic
4 growth, commission for the blind.

5 (d) "Program" means the accessible electronic information
6 service program created in section 5.

7 Sec. 5. (1) The accessible electronic information service
8 program is created under the auspices of the department.

9 (2) The program shall do all of the following:

10 (a) Provide intrastate service to blind and disabled persons
11 that allows them to receive accessible electronic information by
12 means of a touch-tone telephone, computer, or other electronic
13 means.

14 (b) Provide for internet registration for blind and disabled
15 individuals who choose to participate in the program.

16 (c) Make maximum use of state, federal, and other sources of
17 funds that are available to promote accessible electronic
18 information, including seeking grants and in-kind support, and by
19 securing low-cost interstate telecommunications rates or
20 reimbursements.

21 Sec. 7. The department shall oversee the program, which may be
22 administered under a contract with a nonprofit entity. Any contract
23 for program administration shall be let through the state
24 competitive bidding process and may provide a preference for an
25 entity that has previously provided accessible electronic
26 information services to blind and disabled individuals in this
27 state or that has the existing technological infrastructure to

1 provide accessible electronic information.

2 Sec. 9. The entity administering the program shall submit an
3 annual report to the legislative subcommittee that has jurisdiction
4 over appropriations to the department by October 1 of each year.
5 The annual report shall include all of the following:

6 (a) A description of the accessible electronic information
7 services provided.

8 (b) An accounting of any money received or expended.

9 (c) The number of blind and disabled individuals accessing
10 each type of service.

11 (d) The frequency with which each type of service was
12 accessed.

13 (e) Recommendations for improvements in the program.

14 Sec. 11. (1) The public service commission may impose a
15 surcharge of up to \$0.01 per access line per month on customers of
16 telecommunication providers of basic local exchange service as
17 those terms are defined in section 102 of the Michigan
18 telecommunications act, 1991 PA 179, MCL 484.2102, to support the
19 program.

20 (2) Each year after consultation with any entity that
21 administers the program and the department, the public service
22 commission shall determine the amount of money reasonably needed to
23 operate the program for the year. The public service commission
24 shall establish the surcharge for the succeeding year in an amount
25 expected to produce revenue equal to the anticipated cost of the
26 program.

27 (3) Telecommunication providers of basic local exchange

1 service shall remit the money generated by the surcharge to the
2 state treasurer for deposit into an account in the state treasury
3 designated for receipt of the surcharge imposed under this act.