

Legislative Analysis



EXCUSED ABSENCE TO PLAY “TAPS”

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House Bill 4343 as reported from committee

Sponsor: Rep. Kevin Coleman

Committee: Education

Complete to 4-2-21

Analysis available at
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SUMMARY:

House Bill 4343 would amend the Revised School Code to require that school officials at a public school count as an excused absence an instance in which a 6th- to 12th-grade public school student is absent from school for up to a full school day because he or she is sounding “Taps” at a military honors funeral being held in Michigan for a deceased veteran.

Additionally, the board of a school district or intermediate school district (ISD) or the board of directors of a public school academy (PSA, or charter school) would have to ensure that its attendance policy was consistent with this requirement.

The bill would take effect 90 days after its enactment.

MCL 380.1138a

BRIEF DISCUSSION:

According to committee testimony, increasingly fewer people are capable of playing “Taps” at military funerals, leading some to play a recording or an electronic bugle rendition of the bugle call instead. Nothing can replace a live rendition, however, and some argue that the decision to excuse a student who is sounding “Taps” should not be decided on a district-by-district basis, but rather issued as a blanket exemption in the School Code.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bill could create administrative costs for local school districts, ISDs, or PSAs to ensure that their attendance policies are consistent with those required by the bill. Costs would likely be minimal and absorbed using existing staff time.

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