



Senate Fiscal Agency
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BILL ANALYSIS



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Senate Bill 248 (Substitute S-1 as reported)
Sponsor: Senator Dan Lauwers
Committee: Civil Rights, Judiciary, and Public Safety

CONTENT

The bill would amend Section 2163a of the Revised Judicature Act to increase, from 16 years old to 18 years old, the age at which a witness is no longer eligible for a courtroom support dog during testimony in a court proceeding. The bill also would expand the definition of "courtroom support dog" to include an animal-assisted therapy or facility dog approved by the judge of the court.

The bill would take effect 90 days after its enactment.

MCL 600.2163a

BRIEF RATIONALE

According to testimony, courtroom support animals can make testifying in court proceedings easier for alleged victims of abuse or assault; however, some people believe that current provisions of the Act unnecessarily limit the use of these animals. For example, the Act only allows alleged victims under 16 years old to use these animals and requires these animals to meet specified training standards. It has been suggested that these provisions be modified to expand the use of courtroom support animals.

Legislative Analyst: Tyler P. VanHuyse

FISCAL IMPACT

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

Date Completed: 6-9-23

Fiscal Analyst: Michael Siracuse