

Senate Committee on Commerce and Tourism

A meeting of the Senate Committee on Commerce and Tourism was held Tuesday, January 19, 2009 at 2:30 p.m. in room 100 of the Farnum Building.

The meeting was called to order at 2:34 p.m.

Members present: Senators Allen, Nofs, Stamas, Clarke and Hunter

Members excused: None

Senator Allen called the meeting to order.

Senator Allen laid before the committee for consideration Senate Bills 978 (Sen. Allen), 979 (Sen. George), 1015 (Sen. Van Woerkom), 1016 (Sen. Hunter), and 1017 (Sen. George).

Senator Allen acknowledged Senator Hunter for hosting the previous committee meeting in his district.

Senator Allen postponed taking testimony on the package of bills by request of Senator George's aide, Jill Costello, until Senator George could arrive to testify before the committee.

Senator Allen laid before the committee for consideration Senate Bill 697 S-1 (Sen. Allen).

Ken Osborne testified before the committee that the bill was introduced to fix a change from Senate Bill 1483 from 2008. There was a second reference to the number of tool and die recovery zones that needed to be amended to reflect the increase.

Senator Allen indicated that this bill would be taken up again at the next committee meeting.

Senator Allen then returned to Senate Bills 978, 979, 1015, 1016, and 1017.

Jill Costello, aide to Senator George, testified in support of the legislation and explained the intent and history behind it. Ms. Costello explained that the bills were designed to create more tools for the Detroit area to utilize in moving forward in a quicker manner regarding redevelopment of land parcels.

Connie Lewand-Monroe, Executive Director for the Michigan Land Bank, testified in opposition to the legislation. Ms. Lewand-Monroe explained that the Michigan Land Bank finds the package unnecessary due to cooperation that their organization is coordinating in the area already. Additionally, Mr. Lewand-Monroe stated that the legislation could have a detrimental effect because it explicitly gives powers to the redevelopment authority that land banks currently possess implicitly. Mr. Lewand-Monroe fears that this could be legally interpreted to strip land banks of their implicit powers, and asked that it be considered to explicitly give land banks the same powers as the redevelopment authority receives.

Jim Casha testified to clarify some of his comments from the previous meeting. Mr. Casha explained that he supported the legislation, though he had concerns regarding urban agriculture and would like for livestock to be included as possible urban agriculture practices.

Senator Allen informed the committee that another meeting would be held in Detroit on February 1, 2010, on the package of bills regarding the land use redevelopment authority. Senator Allen encouraged those in attendance to contact the committee staff should they have any other information they would like to share with the committee but did not wish to speak about publicly.

Senator Allen informed James McBryde, representing the MEDC, that he would be given opportunity to testify in a coming meeting regarding Senate Bill 697.

Senator Allen adjourned the committee 2:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauren K. Michalak
Committee Clerk

Jason E. Allen
Chairman

Date Approved by Committee