

Senate Committee on Commerce and Tourism

A meeting of the Senate Committee on Commerce and Tourism was held Tuesday, March 9, 2009 at 2:30 p.m. in room 100 of the Farnum Building.

The meeting was called to order at 2:30 p.m.

Members present: Senators Allen, Nofs, Stamas and Clarke

Members excused: Senator Hunter

Senator Allen called the meeting to order.

Senator Nofs moved to adopt the minutes from the meeting held Tuesday, March 2, 2010 with unanimous consent. Senator Clarke supported the motion. By unanimous consent, the minutes from the meeting were adopted.

Senator Allen laid before the committee for consideration Senate Bills 1111 (Allen), 1112 (Clarke), 1113 (Birkholz), and 1114 (Barcia).

Jeff Gaines and Ronald Campbell, representing the American Institute of Architects of Michigan, gave a power point presentation on the package of bills. The gentlemen explained that LEED Certification is one of several programs that exist for measuring sustainability. The gentlemen also explained that the package aligns with their goals and vision as an organization.

Senator Clarke asked the gentlemen to explain the difference between “retrofitting”, “weatherization”, and “LEED Certified”. Mr. Gaines explained that retrofitting involves bringing a building up to today’s standards or changing the usage of the building, while weatherization can be seen as “normal maintenance”. LEED Certified contains several components that addresses many things and is adaptable for sustainability. Senator Clarke asked the gentlemen to speak about the domestic manufacturing for sustainable products. Mr. Campbell stated that this area is continually being improved upon as products are being changed to meet standards.

Lynn Briggs, representing the Contractors Legislative Services, testified in opposition to the legislation. Mr. Briggs explained that he had concerns with the limits in the legislation to only

LEED Certified buildings and would rather see the legislation have a broader impact. Mr. Briggs also had concerns with the impact the legislation would have on the uniform building codes used by the state and what individual municipalities could do with legislation that is in the House of Representatives on a similar topic. Mr. Briggs also shared concerns that the LEED program is costly in that contractors and inspectors have to be certified. Mr. Briggs mentioned that attention should be paid to the unintended outcomes of the program to ensure that buildings remain healthy for those using them as well.

Senator Allen asked Mr. Briggs to provide more information on the concerns he raised to the committee. Senator Stamas also mentioned that the uniformity that Mr. Briggs mentioned can also lead to rigidity that individual communities cannot by-pass, as he has experienced.

Tim Fischer, representing the Michigan Environmental Council, supported the bills and did not wish to testify.

Scott Schrager, representing the Department of Treasury, testified with concerns the department has on the bills. Mr. Schrager stated that he understands the bills are in the early stages, and pointed out that the department's concerns on a number of areas. Mr. Schrager stated his willingness to work with the committee and staff on these areas of concern.

Andy Schor, representing the Michigan Municipal League, testified in support of Senate Bills 1111-1113 with amendments. Mr. Schor said the MML would probably be neutral on Senate Bill 1114 after changes were made to it.

Senator Allen thanked Senator Barcia's staff for being at the committee meeting and for their work in this area.

Andy Johnson, representing the Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce, supported the legislation and stated that a recent survey of their membership showed that this type of program was desired.

Ken Osborne explained that there would be work groups on this package and welcomed those interested in participating to contact him.

Senator Allen laid before the committee House Bill 5555 (Rep. Clemente).

Ken Osborne testified to explain the substitute. Mr. Osborne explained that the bill included language from a Senator Brown bill (SB 1030) that was passed today from the Senate, as well as the original language of the House bill.

Senator Allen explained that the bill would be held for another week before voting would occur.

Kendra Everett, representing Senator Cameron Brown, supported the bill and did not wish to testify.

James McBryde, representing the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, supported the bill and did not wish to testify.

Senator Hunter entered the committee room.

Senator Allen asked Ken Osborne to detail upcoming committee topics. Mr. Osborne informed the committee that next week House Bill 5555 would be on the agenda, and that on the radar was the Land Bank package.

Senator Allen adjourned the committee 3:13 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauren K. Michalak
Committee Clerk

Jason E. Allen
Chairman

Date Approved by Committee