



MAB

MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION OF BROADCASTERS

Submitted by Elena Palombo

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TO: House Committee on Government Operations
FROM: Michigan Association of Broadcasters
RE: House Bills 4700 – 4705
DATE: May 12, 2016

Dear Members of the House Committee on Government Operations,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on House Bills 4700 – 4705, legislation that aims to bring transparency to the expenditure of state funds. The Michigan Association of Broadcasters (MAB), in principle, supports measures that ensure public oversight of government agencies. Government transparency is the top-most priority for the broadcasters and news personnel. Access to public records, government meetings and other public information is critical in allowing broadcasters to do their job and fulfill their primary obligation - to keep the public informed.

The MAB also supports measures that encourage transparency and openness in state government through the use of multiple technology and media platforms, such as the agency's website or social media accounts. State law should reflect these improved methods of communication by identifying publication methods that are user-friendly, cost-effective, and technologically advanced.

In the study by the Center for Public Integrity, Global Integrity and Public Radio International (source: www.stateintegrity.org), Michigan was graded 'F' for numerous failures of transparency and accountability. Our state ranked 44th out of 50 for public access to information, executive, legislative and judicial accountability and political financing information. Findings like these underscore the importance of legislation that tracks and discloses the expenditure of state funds.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Karole L. White
MAB President/CEO