
Detailed Fiscal Analysis

Township authority to assess for wire and cable relocation

The bill authorizes townships, upon petition, to relocate overhead cables, wires, and other equipment, and authorizes townships to assess abutting and benefited properties for the cost of these relocation projects and to provide for the payment of interest on unpaid assessments. Under current law, townships are responsible for the costs of burying the cables. The bill would permit townships to pay the initial costs of burying the cables, and then assess those affected residents through their property taxes to pay for this work. This could reduce costs to any townships that wished to relocate any overhead cables since the affected residents would be assessed for the costs.

Interest on unpaid assessments

The bill also contains a provision that allows townships, by resolution, to waive the payments for all the assessed lands and pay the aggregate amount of the assessments for that year out of township general funds, except any interest on unpaid assessments. The interest on unpaid assessments must be based on the current prime rate. As of this writing, the prime rate is 5.25%. In a conforming change to current law regarding interest owed on unpaid street light assessments, the bill states that interest owed on these types of projects also cannot be paid from township general funds.

Hearings

The bill also requires townships to schedule and give notice to the affected landowners of hearings concerning petitions to undertake overhead cable and wire relocation. These hearings must be held not more than 30 days after the trustees are notified, which could result in some administrative costs if no such other township hearings were scheduled during this timeframe.

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