

Government Administration and Elections Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-6044

AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDY OF ACCESSIBLE SEATING FOR VISUALLY

Title: IMPAIRED PERSONS AT VENUES THAT RECEIVE STATE FUNDING.

Vote Date: 3/26/2025

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 3/24/2025

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Government Administration and Elections Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill would require the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) to conduct a study concerning requiring venues that receive state funding to provide accessible and dedicated seating for those who are visually impaired near the performance area. The proponents of the bill believe those who are visually impaired should have the opportunity to have similar viewing pleasure to those whose vision is not impaired. This change would benefit the visually impaired by giving them the opportunity to have an improved viewing experience at state funded venues.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Michelle Gilman, Commissioner, Department of Administrative Services (DAS) –

Commissioner Gilman is in opposition to this bill and says that while the intent of this bill is good, the bill as written raises concerns. She states that "the term 'state funding' is ambiguous, as the bill uses it very broadly. She also mentions how state funding is defined will determine what venues this bill applies to. She claims the ambiguity of the current bill could encompass many state funded venues such as "K-12 schools, state universities and colleges, theaters, comedy clubs, music venues, and various multi-use auditoriums." The Commissioner further expresses concerns and states that DAS only manages about 10% of state-owned properties and would additionally need to understand "the visually impaired community and the meaning of 'close to performance areas.'" Finally, she states that under the current appropriations, the department would not be able to undertake this task, and therefore would need extra funds to conduct such a study.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

No responses given.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Beverly Allen – Beverly Allen is in opposition of this bill and states that they believe that this study is unnecessary.

The following testimonies expressed general opposition to the bill:

Anonymous

Reported by: Nicholas D'Angelo

Date: 04/02/2025