



## Report on Public Policy Position

**Name of Committee:**

Criminal Jurisprudence and Practice Committee

**Contact Person:**

Valerie Newman/Marty Krohner

**Email:**

valerie@sado.org; marty@mich.com

**Bill Number:**

**HB 4006** (Caswell) Crimes; uttering and publishing; bad check pretrial diversion program; create. Creates new act.

**Date position was adopted:**

3/17/05

**Process used to take the ideological position:**

Committee meeting

**Number of members in the decision-making body:**

10

**Number who voted in favor and opposed to the position:**

Unanimous support in principle

**Position:**

This bill authorizes private agencies to operate diversion programs, which would reduce court backlogs and the committee supports this part of the bill. The concern, however, is that the proposed legislation gives private agencies carte blanche to collect debts, meaning that those agencies do not have to comply with the licensing requirements for collection agencies. There needs to be some oversight/constraints on the collection practices of agencies set up under the auspices of this proposed bill so that the agencies are required to comply with fair debt collection laws.

**The text (may be provided by hyperlink) of any legislation, court rule, or administrative regulation that is the subject of or referenced in this report:**

<http://www.legislature.mi.gov/mileg.asp?page=getObject&objName=2005-HB-4006>

**RECOMMEND STATE BAR ACTION ON THIS ISSUE:**

**Arguments for the position:**

See above for arguments for and against the proposed legislation

**Arguments against the position (if any):**

None provided.

**If the State Bar currently has a position on this subject matter, state the position, and an analysis of whether the recommended position and the current State Bar position are in conflict.**

On June 10, 2005, the State Bar of Michigan unanimously voted to adopt a position of support in principle.

**Fiscal implications of the recommended policy to the State Bar of Michigan:**

None.

**FOR LEGISLATIVE ISSUES ONLY:**

This position falls within the following Keller-permissible category:

- The regulation and discipline of attorneys
- ✓ The improvement of the functioning of the courts
- The availability of legal services to society
- The regulation of attorney trust accounts
- The regulation of the legal profession, including the education, the ethics, the competency, and the integrity of the profession.

**Keller- permissible explanation:**

It is critical that any agencies set up under the auspices of the court, which will be mandatory for those sentenced to diversion programs, comply with fair debt collection practices.