Proposed school attendance policy under fire

High school athletes, musicians and debaters would have to show up for 90 percent of their classes under legislative bill in Lansing. But House Bill 5133 is in trouble in the House Education Committee. "The Michigan High School Athletic Association has problems with the bill," lobbyist Robert VanderLand told the panel last week. "We agree with its goal. We agree that attendance is important. But we disagree with the procedure," he told the panel chaired by Hep. William Kelth, D-Garden City.

"THE ASSOCIATION would have to enforce the rules. We don't want to do that," said VanderLaan, a for-er Senate Republican leader. "MIISAA is a private organization. We get no state funding. We're like the NCAA (National Collegiate Ath-

'Athletics are an easy target for legislators. Our organization opposes the imposition of statewide rules.'

> - Robert VanderLaan MHSAA lobbyist

Rep. Joe Young Jr. D Detroit. "I as an employer will want employers there on time or my machinery doesn't function."

Young added, "Those who graduate hardly have the ability to read and write. There are some motivational problems."

The Detroit Compact, a creation of the Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce, has helped Detroit schools develop standards to assure

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PITELE IX

students are employable. Besides ac-ademic achievement, the standards include good attendance and ability to work with others.

SOME, LIKE Rep. William Bryant, R-Grosse Pointe, didn't agree that attendance was so im-

portant.
"I learned more (during high school) in international badminton tournaments than sitting in class,"

tournaments than sitting in class," Bryant said.
Exchange students from other countries may have trouble procur-ing attendance records to take part in extracurricular activities here, said Bryant, concluding, "We should not report out this bill." Lobbyist Eleanor Dillon said the

Michigan Federation of Teachers, second largest faculty union, sup-ports the bill.

"Parents are split," said Rep. Claude Trim, R-Waterford, citing the high divorce rate and the tenden-ey of some students to spend time with each in different states.

"I'm always hesitant about tread-"I'm always hesitant about tread-ing on the toes of local schools," said-rep. Susan Munsell, R-Howell. "An attendance policy is good, but it's one more thing we'd be forcing on local schools."



"Our rule is that the student must be passing four subjects. Individual schools adopt their own rules (on at-tendance). Some say the student must attend (classes) the day of a

game. "Our fear is that the state will be-come managers of the system," Van-derLaan said, citing legislative ef-forts to prohibit teams from playing in big commercial areas like the Palace and the Silverdome and to central stating times.







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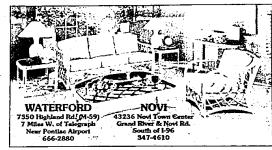


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