

FIRST REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE BILL NO. 716

92ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE BEHNEN.

Read 1st time April 2, 2003, and copies ordered printed.

STEPHEN S. DAVIS, Chief Clerk

2152L.011

AN ACT

To amend chapter 26, RSMo, by adding thereto one new section relating to the poet laureate of the state.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Chapter 26, RSMo, is amended by adding thereto one new section, to be known as section 26.310, to read as follows:

26.310. 1. The post of poet laureate of the state of Missouri is hereby created. The governor may request the poet laureate to compose or perform for important state occasions or ceremonies, and the poet laureate shall be available for official engagements such as readings and lectures to civic, cultural, and educational institutions throughout the state. The poet laureate shall be appointed by the governor, with the advice of the state poet laureate nominating committee established in this section. The poet laureate shall be a resident of the state, shall serve for a term of two years, subject to the pleasure of the governor, and may be eligible for reappointment. The poet laureate shall not receive compensation from the state for the poet laureate's services, but shall be reimbursed in accordance with rates and procedures established for state employees for receipted reasonable and necessary travel expenses directly related to the performance of duties pursuant to this section, including automobile mileage, meals, or lodging. The poet laureate may contract with civic, cultural, and educational institutions or organizations for such fees or compensation as are standard for the poet laureate's profession, but in no event shall the state act in any way as an agent or representative of the parties to any such contracts, nor shall the state or its agents be held liable for such contracts.

2. There is hereby established the state poet laureate nominating committee, to be composed of five residents of the state appointed by the governor, to serve without

19 **compensation. The committee shall consider the diversity of the people and poetry of**
20 **Missouri. At the request of the governor, the Missouri Center for the Book shall nominate**
21 **five people for appointment to the committee, of which at least one shall be a sitting**
22 **member of the board of directors of the Missouri Center for the Book, at least one shall be**
23 **a faculty member at an accredited primary, secondary, or post-secondary institution within**
24 **the state, whose duties include the teaching of poetry, its reading, or writing, at least one**
25 **shall be a practicing poet, having published poetry in publications of national circulation**
26 **within the five years before the nomination, and one may be nominated by the governor.**
27 **No sitting member of the committee shall be eligible for the post of poet laureate. Any**
28 **vacancy on the committee shall be filled in the same manner in which the position was**
29 **initially filled. At the committee's initial meeting held at the call of the president of the**
30 **Missouri Center for the Book, the committee shall elect a chair and vice-chair from among**
31 **its members and shall adopt rules of procedure. If more than one meeting is required, the**
32 **committee shall meet and select a list of three nominees who, based on their poetic**
33 **accomplishments, biographical and professional information, and supporting**
34 **representative material, deserve recognition as poet laureate, and who are willing and able**
35 **to carry out the duties specified in this section. The ranked list of nominees shall be**
36 **approved by the board of governors of the Missouri Center for the Book, and submitted**
37 **to the governor.**