

HCS HB 109 & 34 -- SCHOOL TERM CALENDAR

SPONSOR: Cunningham, 86 (Fares)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass by consent" by the Committee on Education by a vote of 24 to 0.

This substitute repeals the prohibition against starting school earlier than September 1.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that very few districts actually start school September 1 or later. More than 500 districts use the agricultural exemption, even when agriculture is not a feature of the school district economy. To have a law that is broadly ignored or gotten around with exceptions is bad public policy. Setting the school start date should be a local decision. The economic argument for a statewide uniform date isn't viable anymore.

Testifying for the bill were Representatives Fares and Fraser; Dale Joerling, member of Webster Groves Board of Education; Sharon Hoffman, Webster Groves school district teacher; Missouri Council of School Administrators; Missouri School Boards Association; Missouri State Teachers Association; Missouri National Education Association; and Cooperating School District of Greater St. Louis.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say that it affects businesses that rely on tourism.

Testifying against the bill were Missouri Attractions Association; and Missouri Travel Council.

Becky DeNeve, Senior Legislative Analyst