

HB 681 -- Missouri Sunset Act

Co-Sponsors: Bearden, Sutherland, Stefanick, Stevenson, Hobbs, Goodman, Brown, Wood, Portwood, Lipke (157)

This bill creates the Missouri Sunset Act. Each new program authorized by the General Assembly will sunset after a period not to exceed six years. A program may be re-authorized for up to 12 years.

Two years prior to a program's scheduled sunset, the agency responsible for administering the program is required to submit certain information to the Committee on Legislative Research regarding the public need for the continuation of the program. The committee is to hold hearings and issue a report to the General Assembly with recommendations on whether the program should be continued, reorganized, sunset, or consolidated within state agencies not being reviewed. Any recommendations not requiring statutory changes are to be presented to the State Auditor and used in the next scheduled audit of the program to review the agency's implementation of the recommendations.

Programs inactive for two years prior to the scheduled sunset may be exempted from hearing, evaluation, and reporting requirements. During each legislative session, committee staff is required to monitor proposed legislation affecting programs that have undergone review and periodically report to the committee any proposed changes that would modify prior committee recommendations. The General Assembly retains the right to terminate any program prior to the program's scheduled sunset. Any program to which money has been appropriated prior to August 28, 2003, may be subject to review as provided in the bill and recommended for termination or continuation.

A program that is to sunset will continue in existence until June 30 of the following year. Any moneys remaining after the sunset are to be transferred to the General Revenue Fund. Property and records are to be transferred to the Office of Administration or the designated state agency. Bond indebtedness and other written obligations are to remain in effect until the terms are completed and paid in full.

The committee may inspect the records of any state agency and will have the full cooperation of state agencies and officials. Any state employee displaced by the sunset of a program will be assisted in relocating by the state agency and the Division of Employment Security.