

HCS HB 1279 -- HAND FISHING

SPONSOR: Townley

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Conservation and Natural Resources by a vote of 13 to 5.

This substitute allows a person to hand fish for catfish or carp during the months of June and July. Hand fishing will not include nesting boxes, hand hooks, seines, or nets.

FISCAL NOTE: Not available at time of printing.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the Department of Conservation will set limits, by rule, on how many fish can be caught. Hand fishing has a minimal effect on the catfish population and is already legal in Missouri for frogs, turtles, and live bait. Catfish populations are stable or growing in Missouri.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Shoemyer (9); Noodlers Anonymous; Missouri Farm Bureau; and Missouri Farmers Union.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say that hand fishing is not ethical, and you should not be allowed to take fish off the nest. The Department of Conservation has the knowledge and expertise in this area, and it should be left in their hands.

Testifying against the bill were Ozark Fly Fishers; and Department of Conservation.

Marc Webb, Legislative Analyst