

HB 1668 -- Sales/Use Tax: Cultural Districts

Sponsor: Schneider

This bill authorizes St. Charles County to establish a theater, cultural arts, and entertainment district to be funded by a sales tax of up to one-half of 1%. The bill establishes minimum criteria for the formation of the district, including land area and petition requirements.

The district will be controlled by a board of directors, the number of which must be specified in the petition. The board has various powers, including the power to issue bonds.

Public meetings regarding the formation of the district must be held before the governing body of the county can put the proposal to a vote of the people. If the governing body of the county approves a resolution to establish the district, a vote is authorized. After it is approved, the district will be formalized by an ordinance from the governing body.

The bill allows for subdistricts within the district that can oppose the creation of the district and be excluded from the sales tax. The bill establishes a procedure for forming a governing body for a subdistrict.

If there are no registered voters in a subdistrict, one or more property owners who collectively own one or more parcels of real estate comprising at least a majority of the land situated in the proposed subdistricts can file a petition with the circuit court requesting the creation of a subdistrict. The circuit clerk of the county in which the petition is filed will present the petition to the judge, who will set the petition for hearing. The bill contains ballot language for the formation and possible dissolution of the subdistrict. In the event that a subdistrict is dissolved, the bill contains provisions to govern the dissolution.

The sales tax will be collected by the municipality and placed into a special trust fund for the purposes of the district.