

HCS HB 491 -- MISSOURI STATE PARK BOARD

SPONSOR: Kelly (McGhee)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Corrections and Public Institutions by a vote of 7 to 0.

This substitute establishes the Missouri State Park Board, created by Executive Order 86-26, which is responsible for managing all aspects of the Historical Marker Program. The board will consist of eight members, two of whom must reside in a county in which a state historic site of significant military history is located.

The Department of Natural Resources and other state agencies are prohibited from erecting, modifying, or removing any state historic military monument located on any site under its control or located on state land listed on the board's registry without first holding a public hearing and receiving the board's approval. The department must publish a public hearing notice in the Missouri Register at least 60 days in advance of any action to seek the board's approval. The notice must also be published once a week for two weeks in any qualified newspaper in the area where the monument is located.

Anyone who knowingly removes, defaces, or destroys any registered state historic military monument without the approval of the General Assembly or the board will be guilty of a class A misdemeanor.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2006, FY 2007, and FY 2008.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that there is a due process issue regarding the erection, removal, or name change of historic monuments and markers. There have been instances where historic markers have been removed, battle flags taken down, and name changes made on state buildings without any input from interested parties or the public at large. These decisions should not be made by a few people behind closed doors, and there should be an opportunity for people to discuss their concerns in an open forum. By allowing this to happen, we are losing our history; and it is very important not to censor the past.

Testifying for the bill were Representatives McGhee and Kuessner; and Bruce Hillis.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill gave informational

testimony to the committee.

Others testifying on the bill was Department of Natural Resources.

Bob Dominique, Legislative Analyst