

HCS HB 1026 -- FUNERAL PROTESTS

SPONSOR: Lipke (Rucker)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Crime Prevention and Public Safety by a vote of 12 to 0.

This substitute establishes the Spc. Edward Lee Myers' Law which makes it a class B misdemeanor to picket or protest within 300 feet of any church, cemetery, or funeral establishment within one hour prior to the commencement of any funeral and until one hour following the cessation of any funeral. Any subsequent violation will be a class A misdemeanor.

The substitute contains an emergency clause.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2007, FY 2008, and FY 2009.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that a funeral is a time to honor an individual's life and allow family and friends to mourn their loss. Protestors at a funeral are very disruptive and hinder the family's ability to both worship and mourn.

Testifying for the bill were Representatives Rucker and Meadows; Missouri Municipal League; Imojean Myers; Reverend J. L. Robertson; Marine Corps League, Department of Missouri; Missouri Funeral Directors Association; Missouri Veterans Commission; Missouri National Guard Association; Military Officers Association of America, State Council; American Legion, Department of Missouri; and Missouri Association of Veterans Organization.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

Kristina Jenkins, Legislative Analyst