

HCS SS SB 654 -- ST. LOUIS BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS

SPONSOR: Kennedy (Kratky)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Special Committee on Urban Issues by a vote of 5 to 0.

This substitute changes the laws regarding the St. Louis Board of Police Commissioners. It its main provisions, the substitute:

(1) Requires a police commissioner to have been a city resident for two years in order to be appointed to the board;

(2) Allows the board to delegate some of its jurisdiction to hearing officers. At the discretion of the board, a hearing officer may preside over disciplinary matters, prepare reports to the board, and make recommendations on the disciplinary matter and the appropriateness of the recommended discipline;

(3) Specifies the process for selecting hearing officers. After a hearing officer presides over a matter, the hearing officer will become ineligible to hear a case until all hearing officers have been utilized, at which time the rotation will begin again;

(4) Specifies that the board will retain authority to render a final decision after a review of the evidence and the report of the hearing officer;

(5) Grants persons serving as a reserve officer on August 27, 2001, within a county of the first classification or St. Louis County, who has previously completed a minimum of 160 hours of training, a license to function as a reserve peace officer within that county; and

(6) Specifies that St. Louis police officers will not be considered agents of the city. These officers will remain employees of their board of police commissioners. The city will not be liable for any tort or alleged breach of the law committed by the officers.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2008, FY 2009, and FY 2010.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the bill will help commissioners perform their duties more efficiently.

Testifying for the bill were Senator Kennedy; and City of St. Louis.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say that they support the changes in the House substitute.

Testifying on the bill was St. Louis Police Officers' Association.