

SB 896 -- ROAD DISTRICTS

SPONSOR: Stouffer (McGhee)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass by consent" by the Committee on Local Government by a vote of 11 to 0.

Currently, in certain first classification counties and counties of the second and third classification without a township form of government, territory not exceeding eight square miles wherein is located any city, town, or village of less than 100,000 inhabitants may be organized into a special road district. This bill removes the restriction of containing less than 100,000 inhabitants, specifies that cities, towns, and villages containing more than 100,000 inhabitants cannot be included within the special road district, and specifies that the eight-square-mile territorial restriction does not apply in counties of the fourth classification.

Currently, the boundaries of a special road district with a territory not exceeding eight square miles may be extended to not more than 17 square miles by a petition signed by not less than 35 voters in the original district and not less than 50% of the voters in the proposed extension. The bill changes the number of signatures required in the proposed extension to the lesser of 35 voters or 50% of the voters in the proposed extension and specifies that the 17-square-mile restriction does not apply in counties of the fourth classification.

Currently, counties not under township organization may establish and dissolve a public road district of at least 640 acres of contiguous territory upon the submission of a petition signed by the owners of a majority of the acres of land within the proposed or existing district, respectively, and after a hearing by the county commission. The bill authorizes an alternative method of establishment and dissolution of public road districts of at least 640 acres of contiguous territory in counties of the fourth classification. Upon submission of a petition to the county commission signed by 50 voters of the proposed or existing district, respectively, an election for the establishment or dissolution of a public road district must be held within the proposed or existing district. No petition for dissolution can be submitted until four years after the establishment of a district or the last election to expand or dissolve the district.

The bill also authorizes a method for the extension of the boundaries of a public road district of at least 640 acres of contiguous territory in a county of the fourth classification. Upon submission of a petition to the county commission signed by not less than 35 voters in the original district and the lesser

of 35 voters or 50% of the voters in the proposed extension, an election for the extension of the boundaries of the district must be held within the existing district and the proposed extension.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2009, FY 2010, and FY 2011.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that in Lafayette County there are two separate common road districts. The people in these districts would like to pave the roads, but common road districts cannot pass bond issues. The bill will allow the common road districts to be dissolved and joined together to form a new special road district to improve the roads for the residents.

Testifying for the bill were Senator Stouffer and Representative Aull; Gil Rector and Jim Strodtman, Lafayette County Commission; and Terrence Messonnier, Lafayette County Prosecuting Attorney's Office.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.