

HCS SB 958 -- TREE TRIMMING BY ELECTRIC SUPPLIERS

SPONSOR: Goodman (Schad)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Special Committee on Utilities by a vote of 9 to 0.

This substitute allows electric suppliers to trim, remove, and control trees and vegetation that threaten the safe and reliable operation of electrical service. Permissible distances from power lines for removing trees are specified based on the voltage of the power line. Any tree that actually threatens the power supply may be trimmed or removed after a 14-day notice to the owner even if the tree is not within the recommended distance guidelines unless the electric supplier determines that removal of the tree is immediately necessary or the electric supplier is trimming or removing trees following a major weather event or other emergency situation. If any tree which is trimmed by an electric supplier dies within three months as a result of the trimming, the owner may request in writing that the electric supplier remove the tree at the supplier's expense. The electric supplier must respond to the request within 90 days.

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

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the bill will help prevent power outages and allow for reasonable tree trimming by electric utilities.

Testifying for the bill were Senator Goodman; Missouri Association of Trial Attorneys; and Association of Missouri Electrical Cooperatives.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.