

HB 2424 -- Missouri and Midwest High-Speed Rail Commission Act

Sponsor: Brown (50)

This bill establishes the Missouri and Midwest High-Speed Rail Commission Act and the Missouri and Midwest High-Speed Rail Commission consisting of 12 public members appointed by the Governor and three ex-officio members including the directors of the departments of Transportation and Economic Development and the chairperson of the Highways and Transportation Commission. The member qualifications, the procedure for filling vacancies, and the reimbursement of travel expenses are specified in the bill.

The rail commission is required to:

- (1) Meet at least monthly until April 2011 and at least quarterly thereafter;
- (2) Prepare and issue a report to the Governor, General Assembly, and the public recommending the best governmental structure for a public-private partnership to design, build, operate, maintain, and finance a high-speed rail system for Missouri and the Midwest by March 20, 2011. The report must include specific recommendations for legislation, regulations, funding sources, and ways to integrate the high-speed rail system into existing and planned Amtrak expansions, airports, and public transportation systems;
- (3) Issue a follow-up report by February 1, 2012, detailing the status of its recommendations and any revised and updated recommendations based on further public and stakeholder input;
- (4) Develop a process for receiving public and stakeholder input on opinions and proposals for the high-speed rail system and to include the solicitation and receipt of formal expressions of interest and other testimony from global high-speed rail operators including, without limitation, Amtrak;
- (5) Solicit and receive testimony from representatives of other Midwestern states, including local governments; and
- (6) Work collaboratively with the Department of Transportation on any planning projects for high-speed rail administered by the department to comply with federal high-speed rail requirements.

The department may provide staff and other support to the commission from funds available to the department for this purpose. The General Assembly may also specifically appropriate funds to the department and the commission to provide staff and

other support, and the commission may accept monetary or in-kind gifts from any public or private source. These provisions will not preclude the department from planning for high-speed rail.