

HB 2495 -- PRIVATE COLLEGE CAMPUS PROTECTION

SPONSOR: Justus

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Crime Prevention and Public Safety by a vote of 6 to 2. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Legislative Oversight by a vote of 7 to 4.

This bill establishes the "Private College Campus Protection Act." The governing board of a private college or university may employ police officers (Section 173.2700, RSMo). Such officers must take an oath of office and complete police officer training to obtain a peace officer license (Section 173.2703). Private colleges and universities may establish and enforce traffic regulations for on-campus thoroughfares (Section 173.2709).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that this would allow private colleges to establish a police force. Public universities and colleges are already permitted to do this. All the campus officers would have to be Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) certified, and they would match all the standards officers already have to have on campuses. The schools want to be able to take care of situations before handing them over to local law enforcement agencies when they arrive. The private security they currently have works efficiently, but there are things they do not have access to that law enforcement does have access to.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Justus and Kurt McDonald, College of the Ozarks.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.