

HB 260 -- POACHING

SPONSOR: Taylor

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Conservation and Natural Resources by a vote of 7 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Administrative Oversight by a vote of 8 to 0.

This bill specifies that the court may require any person found guilty of chasing, pursuing, taking, transporting, killing, processing, or disposing of certain wildlife in violation of the Missouri Conservation Commission's rules and regulations to make restitution to the state. The moneys collected will be transferred to the State School Moneys Fund.

This bill is the same as HCS HB 1873 (2018).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the wildlife in the state belongs to all Missourians and when poachers take wildlife illegally, they are stealing from the citizens of the state. Missouri has some of the lowest poaching fines in the country and this bill would increase the fines and reduce poaching.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Taylor; John Burk; William Zach Morris; Alex Foster, Quality Deer Management Association; Zach Coy; Dave Pace; Frank Oberle; R. L. Bennett; and the Conservation Federation of Missouri.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill said that 42 other states allow for some form of restitution for illegally taking wildlife.

Testifying on the bill was the Missouri Department of Conservation.