

HB 575 -- INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION (Dohrman)

COMMITTEE OF ORIGIN: Standing Committee on Higher Education

This bill prohibits any public institution of higher education in this state from requiring students to live in campus housing except for first-time freshmen. First-time freshmen may be required to live in campus housing the first year of his or her attendance (Section 173.1590, RSMo).

This bill creates a STEM Studies Enhancement scholarship for students enrolled in a STEM studies enhancement program who meet the eligibility requirements stated in the bill. The bill defines a "STEM Studies Enhancement Program," as an undergraduate certificate program offered by an accredited Missouri higher education institution to high school students that emphasizes applied, advanced skills in any field related to science, technology, engineering, or mathematics. Reimbursement under the program will be up to the average tuition cost of a community college course (Section 173.2505).

This bill authorizes colleges and universities to designate faculty or staff members as campus protection officers. Any faculty or staff member seeking designation as a campus protection officer must submit a certificate of completion from a campus protection officer training program approved by the Department of Public Safety. A campus protection officer will be authorized to carry concealed firearms on campus after submitting proof that he or she has a valid concealed carry endorsement or permit (Section 173.2551).

This bill makes changes to the list of locations an individual can carry a concealed firearm within this state and the list of locations an individual with a concealed carry permit can carry a concealed firearm within the state. This bill also prohibits the state, political subdivisions, and public institutions of higher learning from imposing any policies or contractual requirements that would have the effect of prohibiting employees or students from the carrying of concealed firearms into locations where concealed carry is not otherwise prohibited by law. No changes have been made to the penalties for carrying a concealed firearm in locations prohibited under these sections (Section 571.030).

This bill is similar to HB 258, HB 435, HB 1093 (2019) and HCS HB 1942 (2018).