

HCS HB 762 -- MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

SPONSOR: Wiemann

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Local Government by a vote of 12 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Legislative Oversight by a vote of 8 to 1.

This bill establishes the "Missouri Municipal Government Expenditure Database," to be maintained by the Office of Administration. For each fiscal year beginning on or after December 31, 2021, the database must include extensive information about a given municipality's expenditures and the vendors to whom payments were made. The data base must be accessible by the public without charge and have multiple ways to search and filter the information. Municipalities with websites must provide a link to the database.

A municipality may voluntarily participate in the database, or may be required to participate if a petition process used by its residents is used to require participation as specified in the bill. A link to the database on a municipal website is required.

The Office of Administration may stipulate a format for information and will provide a template for municipalities to use in sending information. Other duties and responsibilities of the Office of Administration regarding the database are detailed in the bill. Financial reimbursement to municipalities for costs associated with the database is authorized.

This bill is similar to SB 125 (2019) and HCS HB 2242 (2018).

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the bill will provide public access to local government expenditure data. The Office of Administration will provide a template so political subdivisions can easily send information. It will save time and money currently expended on open record law requests. Cities should be able to use data to save money on projects.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Wiemann; and Alex Edtin, Missouri University Century Foundation.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say that it could be expensive for small towns to comply and fines are excessive.

Testifying against the bill were Municipal League of Metro St Louis; Missouri Association of Municipal Utilities; and the Missouri Municipal League.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say the fiscal note is accurate and the collection of fine language has been carefully vetted.

Testifying on the bill were Office of Administration; and the Department of Revenue.

This bill is similar to HCS HB 2242 (2018).