

HCS HB 1249 -- EMERGENCY SERVICES

SPONSOR: Hovis

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Local Government by a vote of 12 to 0.

This bill allows the county commission of a county of the first classification with more than 70,000 but fewer than 83,000 inhabitants and with a city of the fourth classification with more than 13,500 but fewer than 16,000 inhabitants as the county seat to impose a county sales tax for the purpose of central dispatching of emergency services.

The county may submit to the voters of the county a proposal to authorize the emergency services sales tax, or the residents of the county may present a petition signed by 10% of the county residents to submit the proposal to the voters.

Upon voter approval of the proposal, the county commission may elect to establish a seven member board, as specified in the bill. The commission shall set the length of term of office and appoint the initial board members with future members being elected positions. Upon appointing the initial members of the board, the board shall assume all powers and duties in regard to administering revenue from the tax and oversee the central dispatching for emergency services.

The sales tax cannot be more than 1% of each taxable sale or service. The sales tax cannot be collected more than 36 months before the operation of the central dispatching of emergency services.

Any sales tax issued for emergency telephone service will terminate at the end of the tax year in which the tax imposed under this bill is certified by the board to be fully operational.

At least once each calendar year, the emergency telephone service 911 board of the county must establish a tax rate that, together with any surplus revenues carried forward, will fund expenditures.

Currently, this only applies to Cape Girardeau County.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the bill will allow the county to get a voter approved sales tax dedicated to 911 services. This will allow for the purchase and maintenance of communications and emergency equipment and to also provide for operational costs.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Hovis and The Penman

Group.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.