

HB 1552 -- REPORTS TO CRIME STOPPERS

SPONSOR: Roberts (77)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Special Committee on Criminal Justice by a vote of 7 to 0.

This bill specifies that no person will be required to disclose, by testimony or otherwise, a privileged communication between a person who submits a report of alleged criminal activity to a crime stoppers organization and the person who accepts the report on behalf of the organization or to produce, under subpoena, any records, documentary evidence, opinions, or decisions related to the privileged communication, as specified in the bill.

Any person arrested or charged with a criminal offense may petition the court for private inspection of the records of a privileged communication concerning the person made to a crime stoppers organization. The petition must allege facts showing that the records would provide evidence favorable to the defendant and relevant to the issue of guilt or punishment. If the court determines that the person is entitled to any or all of the records, the court may order production and disclosure as it deems appropriate.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that there is a big issue in the City of St. Louis of people not wanting to report crimes because those who do report end up hurt or killed as a result of their information being released. This would make the phone calls anonymous except in limited circumstances.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Roberts; Missouri Fraternal Order of Police, St. Louis Police Officers Association and Kansas City Fraternal Order of Police; and Missouri Sheriffs Association.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.