

HCS HBs 1637 & 2150 -- THE RIGHT TO BEAR ARMS

SPONSOR: Taylor

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on General Laws by a vote of 9 to 4.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HBs 1637 and 2150.

The bill establishes the "Second Amendment Preservation Act", which:

(1) Declares that laws, rules, orders, or other actions which restrict or prohibit the manufacture, ownership, and use of firearms, firearm accessories, or ammunition exclusively within this state exceed the powers granted to the federal government except to the extent they are necessary and proper for governing and regulating land and naval forces of the United States or for organizing, arming, and disciplining militia forces actively employed in the service of the United States Armed Forces;

(2) Declares that all federal acts, laws, executive orders, administrative orders, court orders, rules, and regulations, whether past, present, or future, that infringe on the people's right to keep and bear arms as guaranteed by the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution and Article I, Section 23 of the Missouri Constitution must be invalid in this state, including those that impose a tax, levy, fee, or stamp on these items as specified in the bill; require the registration or tracking of these items or their owners; prohibit the possession, ownership, use, or transfer of a firearm; or order the confiscation of these items;

(3) Declares that it must be the duty of the courts and law enforcement agencies to protect the rights of law-abiding citizens to keep and bear arms and that no person, including a public officer or state employee of this state or any political subdivision of this state, can have authority to enforce or attempt to enforce any federal laws, orders, or rules infringing on the right to keep and bear arms;

(4) Specifies that any entity or person who knowingly acts under the color of any federal or state law to deprive a Missouri citizen of the rights or privileges ensured by the federal and state constitutions to keep and bear arms must be liable to the injured party for redress. Reasonable attorney fees and costs may be awarded to the prevailing party with specified exceptions. Qualified immunity shall not be a defense; and

(5) States that any person while acting as an official, agent, employee, or deputy of the United States Government who enforces or attempts to enforce any of the infringements identified in this bill or gives material aid and support to the efforts of others who enforce or attempt to enforce any of the infringements identified in this bill may be permanently ineligible to serve as a law enforcement officer or to supervise law enforcement officers in this state or in any political subdivision of this state.

This bill contains a severability clause.

This bill is similar to HB 1039 (2019).

The following is a summary of the public testimony from the committee hearing. The testimony was based on the introduced version of the bill.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that federal officials and a current presidential candidate want to take guns away from people. The right to bear arms should not be infringed. Supporters also said that Missouri laws should apply to Missourians, and Missourians should have the right to protect themselves and others.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Taylor; Stephen Martin; Susan Myers; Christina Tonsing; Missourians for Public Safety; Camellia Plosser, Republican Liberty Caucus of Missouri; Steve Lampley; Arnie C. AC Dienoff.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that this is dangerous bill that will limit the power of Missouri law enforcement. Opponents believe that the bill is intentionally vague and can prevent state and federal law enforcement from working collectively as a task force. They would like to keep people safe from gun violence.

Testifying against the bill were Jenny Smith; Angela Allen; Rebecca Conway; Kathleen Balmer; Beverly B. Price; Margaret Booker; Philip Knocke; Jeanne D. Mihail, Moms Demand Action For Gun Sense In America; Deb Bowers; Pat Pallardy; Susan Randolph; Shelley Swoyer; and Scot Randolph.

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