

HCS HBs 1901 & 1722 -- FIREARMS ON PUBLIC TRANSIT

SPONSOR: Hicks

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on General Laws by a vote of 11 to 2.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 1901.

Currently, when a person defaces a firearm he or she is guilty of a class A misdemeanor. This bill adds to the offense that if he or she alters, destroys, mars, or removes the manufacturer's serial number, or other identification mark required by law and changes the offense to a class B felony.

Currently, the possession of a defaced firearm is a class B misdemeanor. This bill changes the offense to a class B felony unless the manufacturer's serial number, or other identification mark required by law is merely covered or obstructed but still retrievable then the offense is a class D misdemeanor. It is an affirmative defense to possession of a defaced firearm if:

- (1) The person reported the possession prior to an arrest or the issuance of an arrest warrant or summons; or
- (2) The firearm was manufactured before a serial number or other identification mark was required.

Currently, it is a crime to board a bus with a dangerous or deadly weapon or carry such a weapon in a terminal. Weapons may not be carried in any facility or on any conveyance used for a public transportation system of the Bi-State Development Agency.

This bill allows a concealed carry permit holder to lawfully carry firearms on public transportation, as defined in the bill. Anyone with a permit may also carry a firearm while traveling by bus. A person with or without a permit may transport a firearm in a nonfunctioning state by bus if ammunition is not available. This bill does not apply to property of Amtrak or any partnership in which Amtrak engages.

This bill is similar to SB 700 and HB 641 (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 they want to conceal and carry

firearms on public transit system because they have a constitutional right to protect themselves and their families.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Hicks and Abate Missouri.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that firearms on public transit systems are dangerous and a safety issue for passengers and employees. The safety concerns can make it difficult to attract prospective employees.

Testifying against the bill were St. Louis Regional Chamber; Kansas City Area Transportation Authority; City Utilities of Springfield; Missouri Public Transit Association; City of Kansas City; City of St. Louis; and the Citizens For Modern Transit.