

HCS HB 2528 -- DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

SPONSOR: Pietzman

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Conservation and Natural Resources by a vote of 6 to 1.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 2528.

This bill requires the Department of Conservation, for the first two years after the effective date of any new administrative penalty imposed by rule, to provide at least one warning before imposing the penalty on an individual or entity. The requirement to issue a warning does not apply to modifications of a rule or regulations that only establishes seasons or limits and does not modify an administrative penalty.

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 most people try to obey the laws of the state, but the Wildlife Code is extensive and sometimes hunters and fishermen may not be aware of a new or revised portion of the code. This bill would ensure that people are educated about the new laws but not penalized when they are unaware of changes.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Pietzman; Mackenzie Shoults; Joe Loyd, Reynolds County Commission; Rob Elder, Missouri Hunting and Working Dog Alliance; Alan Koch; Kenny Pratt; Jason Wayne Rutledge; Fred Mattison; Edward Piatt; C.J. Landrigan; Dale Counts, Shannon County Commission; Mike Bell; Rolland Smotherman; Bruce Lindsey; Landon Howell; Jason Burrus; Brett Howell; Michael Bennett; Stacey L. Keeling; Kathleen Keeling; Taylor Howell; Lyndell Keeling; Kenneth Burrus; Robert Howell; Dylan Shepherd; and Dan A. Smith.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill said that the Conservation Commission and its rulemaking process allow for multiple opportunities for public input on all rule changes. In addition, the commission and the department make great efforts to educate the public of the changes.

Testifying on the bill was the Missouri Department of Conservation.