

HCS HBs 324 & 423 -- VOTING MACHINES

SPONSOR: Young

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Elections and Elected Officials by a vote of 9 to 0.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 324.

This bill requires the use of a Help American Vote Act compliant machine for blind or visually impaired voters to be used at state and local elections as well as federal elections. The costs of using the machines at any statewide or general election will be paid by the state and subject to appropriation. The bill does not require voting using the machines, and assisted voting for the blind or visually impaired will continue to be allowed.

This bill is the same as HB 2403 (2020).

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 the bill will protect the civil rights of visually impaired and disabled voters. There is an election administration improvement fund that can be used to repair and update machines. It is desirable to allow individuals to cast their own vote without assistance if possible.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Young; Geoffrey Quinn Barney, Missouri School for The Blind; Joan Hubbard, League of Women Voters - Metro St. Louis; Missouri NEA; Denise, Missouri Voter Protection Coalition; Mo Del Villar, and the American Civil Liberties Union of Missouri.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill provided written testimony.

Testifying against the bill was Arnie Dienoff.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say it might have larger costs for a few small counties currently exempt from federal requirements. Machines may be nearing end of their useful lifespan and programming costs might be expensive for some counties. It might be possible to use the electronic military and overseas voting process for disabled individuals by using assisted screen readers on computers.

Testifying on the bill was Eric Fey, St. Louis County Board of

Elections.

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Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.