

HCS HJR 20, 2, 9 & 27 -- CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

SPONSOR: Henderson

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Elections and Elected Officials by a vote of 7 to 3. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Administrative Oversight by a vote of 9 to 3.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HJR 20.

Upon voter approval, this proposed Constitutional amendment would require an amendment to the state constitution to achieve a two-thirds supermajority vote for passage. Amendments referred by the General Assembly will take effect 30 days after the election if approved.

The resolution also requires petition signatures to place a measure on the ballot as a constitutional amendment to be collected in each congressional district using a percentage requirement of 10%.

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

This bill is similar to HJR 7 (2019) and similar to HJR (2018).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the constitution is the fundamental law of the state and it should be difficult to change. This substitute sets the same standard for all types of constitutional amendments and modestly increases signature gathering requirements. The two-thirds vote figure is modeled off of the United States Constitution and is typical.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Henderson; Missouri Corn Growers Association; Missouri Cattlemen'S Association; Opportunity Solutions Project; and Missouri Soybean Association.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that the initiative process is a fundamental right and should not be changed in such a drastic fashion. Very few, if any, amendments could be adopted with a two-thirds supermajority requirement. Statutory changes are easily changed by the General Assembly sometimes in opposition to the will of the voters. Signature gathering is already very difficult and costs should not be increased for grassroots efforts to amend the state constitution.

Testifying against the bill were Alice Barber; Barbara Beier;

United For Missouri; Frances Farah; Missouri AL-CIO; Jahnavi Delmonico; Richard G VonGlahn, Missouri Jobs With Justice Voter Action; Sarah Starnes; Stephen Davey; Susan Gibson; Melissa Vatterott, Missouri Coalition For The Environment; John Saxton; Arnie Dienoff; Padraic Mcgrath; Brian Wingbermuehle; Planned Parenthood Advocates in Missouri; Stephanie A. Clarke; Missouri Budget Project; Carly Langlois; Gene Davison; Jenny; Shelley Swoyer; Susan Keturah Schmalzbauer; Tony Smith; Collins F Chetwin; Lisa Ann Williams; Margie Richcreek; Sierra Club Missouri Chapter; Kevin Fitzgerald; and Jobs With Justice Voter Action.

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.