

HJR 25 -- CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

SPONSOR: Davidson

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Elections and Elected Officials by a vote of 7 to 3.

Upon voter approval, this proposed Constitutional amendment requires Constitutional amendments submitted by initiative petition to be approved by a majority of registered voters. Registered voters are defined in terms of persons allowed to vote at the most recent general, municipal, or primary election proceeding the amendment vote.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that many elections have very low turnout which can lead to wide disparity in the raw number of votes required to pass a constitutional amendment. Many ballot measure proponents engage in expensive campaigns to secure approval and some advertising is misleading. Ideas should be carefully vetted and the state constitution should not be easily modified except by a true majority of those who wish to vote.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Davidson; Ralph Ray Schell; Cathy Jo Loy; Thomas Martz; Georgene Tilton; Missouri Cattlemen'S Association; Margaret Mathis; Shane Schoeller; Opportunity Solutions Project; Caleb Ridings; and Alan Griffin.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that most ballot measures would be unable to meet the voting requirements of this proposed amendment and it would eliminate the fundamental right to use the initiative petition process for all practical purposes. Missouri citizens should retain the right to act in a democratic fashion to change the law. Petition drives are often undertaken in good faith by grassroots organizations and people who have deeply held beliefs. There is little evidence that registered voters sign petitions without due consideration.

Testifying against the bill were Alice Barber; Barbara Beier; Frances Farah; Missouri AFL-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; Jobs With Justice Voter Action; and Kevin Fitzgerald.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill submitted written testimony.
Testifying on the bill were Cheryl Hibbett; and Alan Griffin.

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.