

HCS HJR 55 -- MISSOURI CONSERVATION COMMISSION

SPONSOR: Dinkins

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Conservation and Natural Resources by a vote of 11 to 8.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HJR 55.

Currently, the Missouri Conservation Commission is made up of four members appointed by the Governor. Upon voter approval, this resolution would increase the membership on the Commission to nine nonpartisan members, one from each of the current Missouri Department of Conservation regions appointed as set forth in the resolution and one appointed by the Governor to represent the state as a whole.

The eight regional members would apply to the Speaker of the House, who after reviewing applicants as set in the bill, would submit up to five nominations for each open position to the Governor. From these nominations, the Governor would appoint one applicant for each region.

This bill is similar to HJR 108 (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 state is very diverse and each area of the state needs representation. The current four members commission does not represent the concerns of the entire state. If the commission was expanded to 9 members, eight of which represent specific areas of the state, this would provide better representation for the concerns of each region.

Testifying for the bill was Representative Dinkins. Additional written testimony was submitted in support of the bill.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that the current structure of the Missouri Conservation was established by statewide vote in 1936 and has become a national model for conservation efforts. Currently the four members represent the state as a whole. By electing regional members, the members could be influenced by regional favoritism.

Testifying against the bill were Sara Parker Pauley, Missouri

Department of Conservation; and Conservation Federation Of Missouri. Additional written testimony was submitted in opposition to the bill.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say that they are in support of expanding the commission to include 8 regional members, but have concerns with the members being elected.

Testifying on the bill was Missouri Farm Bureau.

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.