

HCS HJR 43 -- CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

SPONSOR: Henderson

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Elections and Elected Officials by a vote of 11 to 5. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Administrative Oversight by a vote of 7 to 3.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HJR 43.

This bill requires the Secretary of State to provide voters in each Congressional district with a period in which to review and comment upon all initiative petitions proposing amendments to the Constitution.

Currently, any Constitutional measure referred to the people, by initiative petition or by the General Assembly, must receive approval from a simple majority of the votes cast thereon in order to pass. Upon voter approval, this resolution would require any such measure to receive approval from 60% of the votes in order to pass.

Only citizens of the United States who are properly registered to vote in the state of Missouri shall be considered legal voters for these purposes.

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 residents of rural Missouri are neglected during the signature gathering process of submitting a measure to the voters via initiative. They support a requirement that signatures be collected in all Congressional districts. The Constitution ought to be more difficult to change in order to protect it from influence by out-of-state organizations. The lawmakers who created the initiative process didn't foresee a political environment in which millionaires in other states could easily manipulate laws in this state. The General Assembly is better equipped to enact public policy because it applies a more rigorous vetting process than does the general public. Petitions cannot be amended as they go through the process like a bill can be.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Henderson; Betty Wetzell; Jimmy R Thwing; Richard Garcia; Shelly Knichel; William C Corley; Benjamin Bradley; and Jennifer Spencer.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that it is an attempt to make it harder for voters to impose their will on the policy-making process. Voters wouldn't resort to changing the Constitution if they could trust the General Assembly not to repeal statutory changes they enact at the ballot. By making it more difficult for an initiative petition to reach the ballot, lawmakers are ensuring that the process will be out of reach for grassroots efforts and only attainable with the assistance of out-of-state money. The vast majority of the measures placed on the ballot have been put there by the General Assembly, not by initiative. On any policy the General Assembly would oppose being added to the Constitution, it has the ability to address via legislation. It is the failure to act that makes groups resort to the initiative petition process.

Testifying against the bill were Alicia Gillean; Amy Bonsall; Andrew Rankin; Angela Glazebrook; Ann Ross; Anna Mullen; Becky L Bickhaus; Beth Newman; Bethany Dixon; Bruce Summers; Byron Keelin, Freedom Principle Mo; Carol Moreland; Christopher Stiegman; Connie Larson; Cynthia Holmes; Cynthia M Eckelkamp; Daniel F. Curran; Daniel Tracy; Dava-Leigh Brush; Debbie Schnorf; Dennis McCormack; Don Crozier; Donald Lowther; Douglas Mullen; Elizabeth A Franklin; Gary L Ridenhour; George Waidler Stair; Geraldine I Graves; Greg A Campbell; Jan Farthing; Jane Puszkas; Jeff Briggs; Jerry Arlon Mercier; John L Antone II; John Weber; Judith Moorefield; Kay Park; Kenneth Kaskadden; Kenneth Wood; Kevin Hertel; Laura Hausladen; Lee White; Les Larson; Linda Kaskadden; Lori Bourgeois; Marianne Ojile; Marlyn Starkey; Martin Walsh, Missouri Progressive Action Group; Marvin E. Sands, Jr.; Mary Gross; Megan R. Calzone; Melanie D Busse; Michael Moorefield; Michele Arri; Mindy Sue McIntosh; Mitch Wrenn; Monica M Huddleston; Nancy Danner; Nathan Vendeuvre Mooney; Nicole Olszewski; Philip Hartnagel; Ray Herron; Rebecca Michelle Ridenhour; Rian Cerny; Richard Best; Richard Egan; Richard Keith Spurlock; Richard Mckie; Richard Starkey; Rick Turner; Robert R. Bergfeld; Robyn Hamlin; Rodney D Farthing; Sally S Weber; Sharon Hartnagel; Sherry L Buchanan; Stephanie Clarke; Stephen; Steve Spears; Steven D Reed; Steven Wolfrom; Susan Cunningham; Susan Gibson; Susan Taylor; Susanne Boehm; Tony Smith; Tracee Stotts; Viorica Georgeta Lucas; W B Tichenor; Walter Glenn Winfrey; Wayne & Jennell Houts; Amy Crouse; Donald A Bickhaus II; Joan Gentry; Judith A Campbell; Margaret E Gray; Patricia Oroark; Aidan Derossett; Alvin R Whitehead; Anne Zivnuska; Ashton Kuehnle, Sierra Club, Missouri Chapter; Cheryl Lynn Adelstein, Jewish Community Relations Councils; Claudia Jenkins; David Brand; Davod C. Lowell; Donna Cusumano; Emily Hornstra; Erin Gray; Getta R. Hall; James Janes; James R Turner; Jan Schumacher; Jarrell Lusk; Jenna

Roberson; Joan M Moehl; John Bartin; Kathleen Dolson; Linda Rezny; Linda Rezny; Lisa D Witte; Mahree Skala; Malik Lendell; Margie Richcreek, Trinity UMC Justice Task Force; Marian Bauer; Mary L Whitehead; Matthew Short; Melissa Vatterott, Missouri Coalition For The Environment; Michael L. Lester; Nancy Goth; Nancy Meier; Nancy Price; Patricia Bartholome, League of Women Voters of Kansas City, Jackson, Clay And Platte Counties; Paul Leykamp; Phyllis Baker; Rachel Speed; Randee Steffen; Ruth Ehresman; Sarah Starnes; Sherrie Hall; Stacy Summers; Steve Mcluckie; Susan Turk, Missouri Progressive Action Group; Trish Gunby; Wendy Rigby; Maria Kershner; Amy Higgins Stambaugh; Amy Schroeder; Bailey Baker; Caleb Roth; Carl Fischer; Cathy J Smith; Charles Purnell; Claude Owen; Diane Luecke; Donald Gene Moushey; Elad Gross; John Boles; Julianne Crockett; Laura Ramsey; Linda Maher; Lisa Kuehne; Lynn Nienkemper; Melanie Holtzclaw; Nichole Brinkmann; Patricia Aalseth; Rhonda Ann Riggs; Shawn Faulkingham; Stephanie Willingham; Andrew Reich; Bonnie Wilson; Carolyn McMahon; Eli Hurwitz; Kaye Campbell; Lori Parsons; M Kris Wesche; Marcia Ann Petrus; Rike Reuter-Hart; Sarah Davis; Susan C Koen; Tom Ferri; Helen J Diklich; Jennifer White; Pamela Conner; Stephen P. Allgeier; Amy Feranec; Brittany Kiefer; Daniel M Summerford; Joann Stephan; Kerry Moloney; Lori Green; Lori King; Richard M Kutta; Andrew Impastato; Cheri Crockett; David Dain Smith; Deborah Ashcraft; Emily Lapp; James Layton; Jan Brennan; Joshua Pensel; Kate Lovelady; Kyle Chilcoat; Michael Kelley; Nomachot Adiang, Missouri Health Care For All; Susan Touchon; Advocates of Planned Parenthood of The St. Louis Region And Southwest Missouri; Alyssa Burke; Amanda Michel; Carly Ferdman; Charles Daniel-Schmidt; Clint Crabtree; Crystal Noamesi; Erica Ascani; Jamie Mercer; Judith Balluff; Kathy Lange; Keli Houston; Kevin Smith; MaDonna Lowell; Nancy Solomon Desloge; Padraic McGrath; Sherry Goshen; Marilyn McLeod, League of Women Voters of Missouri; Adam Guttman; Daron Smith; Deborah Sexton; Denise D. Lieberman, Missouri Voter Protection Coalition; Diane Bird; Diane Wiegel; Donna Burge; Dorothy Arvizu; Drew Van Dyke; Elizabeth C Becker; Jacob McGuire; Jan Rouff; Jeffrey Bittle; Juliana(Julie) Schulze; Kimberly Ann Bessey; Kimberly Spreng-Maxwell; Linda Kay Switlik; Mary Lindsay; Matt Beeman; Mindy Rouff; Nancy Neiman; Rebecca S Tallent; Cheryl Hanschen; Cheryl Hanschen; Dava-Leigh Brush; Dee Bray; Jamie N Locastro; Kathy Lafrensen; Lucas Corbin; Marcel Hagens, Action St Louis; Mary Rotter; Matthew Farwig; Miles Brusherd; Nancy Meyer; Missouri NEA; Rachiel Redmond; Sean Flanagan; Stephanie Gamble; Susan Jesse; Susan Shumway; Tamela Jo Stanek; Tara Rocque; William Stein; Ron Calzone; Barbara Hoppe; Jane Reed; Joseph Zahn; Laura Burkhardt; Marla J Marantz; Thomas Williams; Timothy John McMahon; Winifred Colwill; Caroline Otte; Clarisse Teepe-Fryrear; Jack Charchol; Jessica Paxton; John Farmer De La Torre; Lisa A Woodson; Matthew Downs; Peggy Charchol; Stan Miller; Alice M Holtz; Allyn Harris Dault; Arnie C. Dienoff; Ashleigh K Behlmann; Catherine Betz; Christie Kay Mangan; Devon

Coy; Freda L Holley; Heather Yates; James M Allen; Jarrett Pillsbury; Judith Wesemann; Kristin Michelle Massaro; Lori Dameron; Mary Waggener; Melissa Maune; Michelle Hayek; Stephan Cano; Tari Sander; William Bush; Linda F Mccoy; Marion Miller; and Katherine Ann Dillon.

This bill is similar to HJR 79 (2022).

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.