

SJR 21 -- PROPERTY TAX ASSESSMENTS FOR SENIORS

SPONSOR: Roberts

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Ways and Means by a vote of 8 to 1. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Regulatory Oversight by a vote of 6 to 0.

This Constitutional amendment, if approved by the voters, allows a county or a city not within a county to exempt taxpayers 65 years of age or older meeting certain criteria, as described in the amendment, from increases in the assessed valuation of such taxpayer's residential real property. Such exemption shall be approved by the governing body of the county or city not within a county through an ordinance. In addition to criteria required in the amendment to receive an exemption, a county or city not within a county may also require a taxpayer to meet certain income requirements.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that as a result of real estate assessments rising each year, homeowners are paying ever-increasing property tax. Individuals on fixed income bear a much heavier burden covering these rising costs. Of all Missouri residents, senior citizens have had the most difficult struggle with this increase in taxes. Frequently, Missouri seniors end up being forced out of their homes because of their inability to cover the increased taxes.

Supporters further say that most seniors have saved money and built a nest egg for their years in retirement. But because of the rising real estate taxes, many seniors have found it necessary to go back to work. Instead, seniors should be in a position to enjoy retirement without having to worry about the possibility of losing their homes.

Testifying in person for the bill were Senator Roberts; and AARP.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

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