

HCS HBs 1477 & 1437 -- BLAIR'S LAW

SPONSOR: Sharp (37)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Special Committee on Urban Issues by a vote of 4 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Regulatory Oversight by a vote of 8 to 0.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 1477.

This bill establishes "Blair's Law" which states that a person commits the offense of unlawful discharge of a firearm if that person, with criminal negligence, discharges a firearm within or into the limits of any municipality. This provision does not apply if the person discharges a firearm as specified in the bill.

This bill contains a graduated penalty provision.

This bill is similar to SB 189 and HCS HB 109 (2023).

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

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that this bill addresses the needless tragedy from indiscriminate gunfire, with the bill bearing its name from Blair Shanahan Lane, a young girl killed by indiscriminate gunfire in 2011. Supporters cite other incidents of innocent people who have lost their lives to indiscriminate or celebratory gunfire. Current penalties for such gunfire are inadequate, equating to nothing more than a fine. There is no reason for dangerous indiscriminate gunfire. This bill attaches the appropriate penalty for such dangerous acts.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative Sharp; The City of St. Louis; Michele Shanahan Demoss; Chase Campbell, Winton Policy Group, National Association of Social Workers, St. Louis County; Missouri Chamber of Commerce & Industry; City of Kansas City, Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, Missouri Troopers Association.

OPPOSERS: 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.