

HJR 125 -- MANAGEMENT AND FUNDING OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

SPONSOR: Mayhew

Currently, the Conservation Commission consists of four members appointed by the Governor with not more than two members from the same political party. If approved by the voters, this resolution would allow the number, qualifications, and terms of the Commission members to be set by law, with no more than half of the members from the same political party and each member residing in a different Congressional district, as specified in the bill.

The resolution specifies that if the Governor fails to fill a vacancy on the Commission within 30 days, the remaining members shall fill the vacancy by a majority vote from a list of 10 individuals provided by the General Assembly. The General Assembly will develop the list of individuals as specified in the resolution.

The resolution also would prohibit any member from accepting a gift of any value from anyone who receives or has received compensation from or performs a service for the Commission. If a member receives a gift, the Missouri Ethic Commission must investigate as specified in the bill. If found to have violated the prohibition, the Commission member shall vacate the office. The Ethic Commission must forward its findings to the Attorney General for prosecution.

Anyone who enters into a contract with the Conservation Commission must report, as specified in the resolution, each item, service, or thing of value provided to each member of the Commission or any person related to a Commissioner within the first degree of consanguinity.

The resolution also specifies that beginning on January 1 the year following approval, 10% of revenue derived from the Conservation Sales and Use Tax will go for duties and responsibilities of the Division of State Parks within the Department of Natural Resources and 10% for the duties and responsibilities of local political subdivisions in which land owned by the Department of Conservation is located. The resolution specifies the manner in which the portion of the revenues to local political subdivisions is to be distributed.

The resolution also requires the Department of Conservation to pay property taxes on real property in the amount not less than that private citizens would be required to pay. The General Assembly must also review any proposed sale or purchase of real property by

the Department of Conservation prior to the transaction being final.

This bill is similar to HJR 58 (2023).