

HCS SS#4 SCS SJRs 74, 48, 59, 61 & 83 -- CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

SPONSOR: Coleman (McGaugh)

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- Legislative Oversight by a vote of 7 to 3.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for SJR 74.

Upon voter approval, this resolution requires any proposed constitutional amendment to receive a majority vote both statewide and in a majority of congressional districts in order to pass.

The resolution prohibits a foreign country or political party from sponsoring an initiative petition proposing an amendment to the constitution, and from making a contribution or donation in connection with an election on a proposed constitutional amendment or to a political committee or party favoring or opposing a proposed constitutional amendment. It also prohibits any person from soliciting, accepting, or receiving a contribution or donation from a foreign government or political party in connection with a proposed constitutional amendment.

This resolution provides that no person shall be eligible to vote on any measure submitted to the people that amends, repeals, or replaces the constitution, unless such person is a legal resident of the state of Missouri and a citizen of the United States.

The resolution provides that voters in each Congressional district shall have the opportunity to review and comment on initiative petitions proposing amendments to the Constitution in a public forum administered by the Secretary of State.

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 requiring geographical consensus as well as population majority consensus in order to change the constitution would better reflect the federal process of changing the constitution and protect rural areas from being consistently outvoted by metropolitan areas.

Testifying in person for the bill were Senator Coleman; Campaign Life Missouri; Missouri Right To Life; and Missouri Farm Bureau.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that any method of changing the Constitution other than majority rule is undemocratic. The only alternative to majority rule is minority rule. Requiring a concurrent majority would give a very small number of people a veto over the will of the majority of the state.

Testifying in person against the bill were Abortion Action Missouri (Formerly Pro Choice Missouri); Sierra Club Missouri Chapter; Amy Hammerman, National Council of Jewish Women St. Louis; Bruce Rogers; Denise Lieberman, Missouri Voter Protection Coalition; American Civil Liberties Union of Missouri; Ashleigh Judd; Jeremy Abblay, Missouri Workers Center; Latwanya Davis; Marieta Ortiz; Paul Irving; Stacey Cowsette; Veronica M. Robinson; Empower Missouri; Missouri Budget Project; Missouri Nea; Advocates of Planned Parenthood of The St. Louis Region and Southwest Missouri; Dava-Leigh Brush; Ron Calzone; PROMO; Jobs With Justice Voter Action; Missouri Realtors; Arianna Kimbrough; Arnie C. Dienoff; Liberty Link Missouri; Daniel Radke; Dominic King; Ellen Farkas; Josyland Rucker; Health Forward Foundation; Terrence Wise; Thomas Mitchell; Tyler Emery; Wanda Rogers; and Chris Miller.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say that, while they support this resolution, other similar proposals have various provisions that they would like to see included.

Testifying in person on the bill was Kyle McCollom.

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.