

HB 225 -- LAW ENFORCEMENT PRACTICES

SPONSOR: Myers

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Crime and Public Safety by a vote of 12 to 4, with 2 voting Present.

This bill allows the chief law enforcement executive for any law enforcement agency to request assistance from a law enforcement agency in another jurisdiction, including from outside the State but within the United States. The bill creates provisions for how arrests are handled if executed by an officer outside of his or her jurisdiction. This bill specifies that, for benefits and other employment-related matters, law enforcement officers remain employees of their respective law enforcement agencies throughout any request for assistance.

Currently, the driver of an emergency vehicle can park or stand, regardless of the normal rules of the road; proceed past a red or stop signal or stop sign, after slowing down as necessary for safe operation; exceed the speed limit as long as the driver does not endanger life or property; and disregard regulations governing direction of movement or turning in specified directions. These exemptions apply only to emergency vehicles that, while in motion, sound audible signals by bell, siren, or exhaust whistle as reasonably necessary, and when the vehicle is equipped with at least one lighted lamp displaying a red light or blue light visible under normal atmospheric conditions from a distance of 500 feet to the front of such vehicle.

The bill provides that an authorized emergency vehicle operated as a police vehicle is not required to use an audible signal or display a visual signal when the vehicle is being used to get evidence of a speeding violation; respond to a suspected crime in progress when use of an audible or visual signal, or both, could reasonably result in the destruction of evidence or escape of a suspect; or conduct surveillance of a vehicle or the passengers of a vehicle who are suspected of involvement in a crime.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that this bill establishes the framework for out-of-state assists from law enforcement agencies outside the State as well as for when Missouri sends its officers to a different state. It is vitally important that this get done, but we need to make sure we have assets in place since the World Cup is coming to Kansas City in 2026. The mutual aid agreement would just be at the request of the chief law enforcement official, and the chief law enforcement official from the agency receiving the request does not need to say yes. This also allows an officer

to exceed the speed limit without lights and sirens if the speed limit is set by State statute.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative Myers; Mark Bruns, St. Louis Police Officers Association; Missouri Fraternal Order Of Police; Fred Farris; Legislative Law Enforcement Coalition And Mo Police Chiefs Assn.; St. Louis County.

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.