

HB 239 -- CONTRACTS FOR WORK ON THE STATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM

SPONSOR: Pouche

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Transportation by a vote of 15 to 1. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules-Legislative by a vote of 9 to 0.

This bill specifies that the Highways and Transportation Commission must publish on the Department of Transportation's official website its cost estimate and project completion date for any construction, maintenance, or repair work on the state highway system at the time the bidding on a contract for the work first closes.

This bill is the same as HB 2238 (2024).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that this will increase transparency and accountability. Many states publish these estimates. If there were major issues, the other states would have rolled those policies back. This increases the integrity of the process and is the more common practice.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative Pouche; Arnie Dienoff; Associated General Contractors of Missouri; Dale Williams, Missouri Asphalt Pavement Association.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that releasing engineer estimates leads to increased costs because future bidders are able to raise their bids. It leads to a higher "floor" for new bids. It is true that the Department's practice isn't the most common across the country, but it is the best practice. The expected increase in average bids should the legislation pass is about 5%. The Department pursues a fair and competitive environment. This bill hurts those goals.

Testifying in person against the bill was Ed Hassinger, MODOT.

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.