

HCS HB 558 -- SHERIFFS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM

SPONSOR: Hovis

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Pensions by a vote of 13 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules-Administrative by a vote of 10 to 0.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 558.

This bill provides for 50% of the moneys remaining in the Deputy Sheriff Salary Supplementation Fund at the end of the biennium to be credited to the Sheriffs' Retirement Fund. (Section 57.278)

This bill allows for the sheriffs to receive an additional sum of \$15.00 for serving any summons, writ, subpoena, or other order of the court as specified in the bill. The State Treasurer is authorized to deposit \$10.00 of such moneys in the Deputy Sheriffs Salary Supplementation Fund and \$5.00 of such moneys in the Sheriffs' Retirement Fund. (Section 57.280)

This bill provides that any county receiving reimbursement related to the per diem cost of incarceration of prisoners confined to jails or medium security institutions, will pay \$2.00 per prisoner per day of such reimbursement to the State Treasurer, who will deposit the money in the Sheriffs' Retirement Fund. (Section 221.105)

The bill repeals the assessment and collection of a \$3.00 surcharge collected in civil actions (Sections 57.955, 57.962, and 488.024.).

This bill is similar to SCS for SB 141 (2025).

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 the Sheriffs' Retirement Fund needs stable funding sources. The Missouri Supreme Court struck down as unconstitutional the collection of a surcharge to provide moneys to the Fund. The sheriffs already contribute 5% of their salaries into the Fund under current law. One option is to allow for an increase in the per diem cost of keeping the prisoners in the county jails. The other option is to increase the fee for service of process to \$5.00. There is the possibility of the State providing the funding and counties contributing moneys to the Fund. The actuary indicated that in five years, with the generation of

about \$4 million starting in the year 2026, the funding would increase to around 82%. If the funding source is not addressed it would result in elimination of medical benefits to the retirees. Currently, \$100 has been deducted from payments to retirees. The retirees are dealing with inflation and some of the sheriffs are physically unable to take up a second job. There are widows living on a pension. Further, the Fund is projected to go bankrupt in nine years without additional moneys. The retirement system needs to continue otherwise there is a concern for lack of experienced candidates to serve as sheriffs.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative Hovis; Kenny Jones; Melissa Lorts, Mo Sheriffs Retirement; Sheriff Chris Degase, Douglas County Sheriff; Sheriff Steve Pelton, Missouri Sheriffs United.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say the Missouri Association of Counties is looking at the issues to solve the problem. The general consensus is for the counties to put money in the Fund but some don't have the ability to pay.

Testifying in person on the bill were Missouri Association of Counties; County Commissioners Association of Missouri; County Employee Retirement Fund.

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.