

HCS HBs 617, 790 & 847 -- VOTER QUALIFICATIONS

SPONSOR: Stinnett

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Corrections and Public Institutions by a vote of 10 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules-Legislative by a vote of 5 to 0.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HBs 671, 790 & 849.

Currently, a person on probation or parole for a felony conviction is not entitled to vote until he or she is finally discharged.

This bill allows a person on probation or parole to vote, unless they were convicted of a felony or misdemeanor connected with the right of suffrage.

This bill is similar to HB 1927 (2024) and HCS HB 248 (2023).

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 regaining the right to vote is foundational in reintegrating individuals into their communities. Formerly incarcerated people begin to feel they are a part of society again and that their voice matters. Restoring voting rights reduces recidivism, decreasing the costs associated with correctional facilities, improving public health, and encouraging civic participation. These individuals pay taxes, they have kids that attend public schools, and they are affected by electoral decisions, especially at the local level, so they should have a say in elections. Many individuals who have completed parole still do not vote due to uncertainty about whether they have had their rights restored. This bill would make it very clear: if you have left incarceration, you can vote.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative Stinnett; American Civil Liberties Union of Missouri; REACH Healthcare Foundation; Denise Lieberman, Missouri Voter Protection Coalition; Marilyn Mcleod, League of Women Voters of Missouri; Secure Democracy USA; Americans For Prosperity; Secure Election Project; Mallory Rusch, Empower Missouri; James Robinette, Missouri National Association for the Advancement of Colored People ; Missouri Voter Protection Coalition; Jeff Smith, Missouri Appleseed.

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.