

HB 660 -- LOCAL TAXATION

SPONSOR: Keathley

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Ways and Means by a vote of 6 to 3.

This bill specifies that if a political subdivision submits a tax proposal for a new or increased tax authorized under a specific statute and it does not pass, the proposal cannot be submitted again for two years following the rejection.

The bill allows a political subdivision to reintroduce a previously rejected tax proposal to voters before the next election cycle if the new proposal introduces a new tax authorized by law or increases the rate of existing tax authorized by law in a federal- or state-declared natural disaster area.

The bill requires that if the governing body of a municipality wishes to establish a sales tax by way of a proposed community improvement district, the ordinance must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the governing body. Any ordinance or petition approved under these provisions that establishes a district that is funded by a sales tax is required to pass by at least a two-thirds majority vote.

This bill exempts non-profit entities pursuant to 26 U.S.C. Section 501(c) from any property tax or special assessment that might be levied by a taxing district.

This bill also requires that any ballot measure proposing a tax alteration on real property must clearly state the impact of the proposed change in terms of the actual amount per \$100,000 of a property's market value within the ballot language.

The bill requires that if voters are asked to approve a permanent increase to the tax rate ceiling before a temporary levy increase expires, the ballot language must clearly indicate that if the permanent increase is approved, the temporary levy will become permanent.

The bill defines "current tax rate ceiling" and "increased tax rate ceiling". When a majority of voters in a political subdivision approve a tax rate increase, the subdivision must use the current tax rate ceiling and the approved increase for the following tax year. If the assessed valuation of real property decreases in that year, the subdivision can adjust its levy rates to ensure it receives the same revenue it would have received without the property value reduction. The use of the increased tax rate

ceiling must be revenue neutral, as mandated by the Missouri Constitution.

This bill further requires that any project proposals from a transportation development district be submitted to the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission, or to the local transportation authority, as applicable, for approval prior to the construction or funding of any project. The Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission, or the local transportation authority, as applicable, must approve the project by a two-thirds majority if the proposed project is to be funded by a sales tax.

This bill is similar to HCS HB 2058 (2024).

PROponents: Supporters say that for too long citizens have been manipulated by local government officials to support sales taxes, so this bill is necessary to protect taxpayers and small businesses, as well as halt the exploitation. Political subdivisions should not be able to repeatedly place a tax increase on the ballot if voters reject such an increase.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative Keathley; Dennis Ganahl, Missouri Tax Relief Now.

OPponents: Those who oppose the bill say that cities and political subdivisions do not have enough money to promote a ballot issue, only information on a measure. Many municipalities have small budgets for campaigning, advertising, and promotion, and the election itself is the sharing of information on a ballot measure. Cities don't try to sneak taxes in on their constituents, but there are needed improvements to be done and services to be provided.

Testifying in person against the bill were Missouri Economic Development Financing Association; Missouri Municipal League; Missouri Association of Counties; Municipal League of Metro St. Louis; City of Springfield; Missouri School Boards Association; City of Independence .

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say election authorities do not want to be in the middle of a political issue as it pertains to how ballot measures are named or ordered.

Testifying in person on the bill were Kenny Mohr, Missouri State Assessor's Association; Missouri Association of County Clerks And Election Authorities.

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.