

HCS HB 1939 -- GOLF CART OPERATION

SPONSOR: Murphy

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Transportation by a vote of 13 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules-Administrative by a vote of 8 to 1.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 1939.

Currently, the governing body of any municipality can allow people to operate golf carts or motorized wheelchairs on streets and highways within their jurisdiction with certain restrictions.

This bill prohibits golf carts and motorized wheelchairs from being operated on roads with a posted speed limit above 25 miles per hour, unless the resolution or ordinance adopted authorizing their use specifies a higher speed. Golf carts operated on a public road must meet certain equipment requirements, as specified in the bill. A person operating a golf cart on a public road must have insurance and a valid driver's license, and golf carts must not be operated on sidewalks or pedestrian or bicycle trails, except private sidewalks where the private owner of the sidewalk authorizes their use.

The bill allows local ordinances to require golf carts to use designated paths adjacent to public streets. A person operating a golf cart will not be required to wear protective headgear. Golf carts must be driven as near as practicable to the right side of the road.

The following is a summary of the public testimony from the committee hearing. The testimony was based on the introduced version of the bill.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that there are a plethora of golf carts being used on the roadway. Many states have similar regulations for road safety and Missouri should follow suit. Children shouldn't be operating vehicles on the roadway, and the bill requires important safety equipment, prevents people without licenses from driving, and makes hiking trails safer as well. This limits golf cart use on public roads to 16 years old and older, because kids don't understand traffic laws and end up in danger when they fail to yield properly or commit other traffic violations.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative Murphy and Arnie C. Dienoff.

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.