

HCS HB 2600 -- AMBULANCE DISTRICTS

SPONSOR: Farnan

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Local Government by a vote of 17 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules-Administrative by a vote of 6 to 0.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 2600.

Currently, county commissions divide newly-formed ambulance districts into six subdistricts for the election of members to the district's board of directors. This bill makes the election for the board of directors at-large, but allows ambulance districts to divide into six election subdistricts.

Currently, six-member ambulance district boards can adopt a resolution changing the size of the board to seven, with one board member running district wide, five, or three members. This bill requires such a resolution to name any vacancy to be filled at a subsequent election, if the size of the board is increasing. If the size is decreasing, all existing board members will complete their terms.

This bill requires county commissions, upon written request of a majority of the remaining board members, to fill vacancies on ambulance boards by appointment, within 30 calendar days.

The bill moves the filing location for a petition for annexation of land to an ambulance district from the county clerk to the board of directors of the ambulance district.

Currently, if a question of annexation is submitted to voters and approved, the county commission declares by order the territory annexed. This bill provides that the board of directors will enact an ordinance incorporating the territory.

This bill describes the necessary criteria that must be included on every petition or resolution calling for an ambulance district consolidation, as provided in the bill. The consolidation plan must be filed with the county clerk and presented to the county commission.

Notice of intent to consolidate is required to be published in a newspaper of general circulation in every county in which the

consolidated district will be located, and a joint public hearing will be held within 10 days after the date of the second publication. The bill further details the formatting of the notice of intent.

Currently, consolidation of an ambulance district is only permissible if approved by voters. This bill requires a public vote on the consolidation if an objection is filed. If no objection is filed within 30 days of the public hearing, the county commission will order the districts consolidated. Objections must be signed by no less than 5% of the votes cast for governor in the most recent gubernatorial election.

A consolidated district can impose an initial tax levy up to the highest tax levy of the consolidating districts, provided the levy is specifically set forth in the ballot language and submitted to and approved by voters. If no vote occurs, the consolidated district can impose a tax equal to the lowest of any existing property or sales tax rate of the districts to be consolidated.

All assets and obligations of the existing ambulance districts will become assets and obligations of the consolidated district.

This bill allows any ambulance district that has contracted for ambulance service with another ambulance district for more than five consecutive years to submit, by joint resolution with the board of the contracting ambulance district, request consolidation of the districts. Upon receipt of the resolution, the county clerk will order the consolidation without the need for a notice or public hearing.

This bill is similar to SB 975 (2026).

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 some ambulance districts in sparsely populated areas struggle with funding and public willingness to serve on the board. The goal of this bill is to make it easier for districts to consolidate, pooling resources and casting a wider geographical net to recruit board members. The bill is the result of a recent consolidation. The provisions are designed to solve problems that were encountered by the districts that were trying to consolidate.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative Farnan; Ambulance District Association of Missouri ; John Barclay; and Missouri Ambulance Association.

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.