

HCS HB 2605 -- ELECTIONS

SPONSOR: McGaugh

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Elections by a vote of 9 to 1.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 2605.

This bill provides that, in the case of a bond election, if an election contest is not filed within 30 days after the official announcement of the election result, all conditions of state election law must be deemed to have been complied with in the issuance of the bond.

Currently, the first notice of election must be published within two weeks of the election, and the second must be published within one week of the election. This bill requires both notices to be published within six weeks prior to the election.

Currently, jurisdictions with populations under a certain size and in which no newspaper meeting the legal requirements is published are permitted to send legal notice to voters via mail instead of publishing the notice in a newspaper. This bill allows any election authority the option to mail legal notice rather than publishing the notice in a newspaper. The mailing must occur within six weeks prior to the election. The election authority is permitted to exclude from the mailing any voter designated as inactive.

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 this bill would simply make the statutory notification requirements for bond elections easier to comply with. This would prevent a situation in which a bond was approved by voters but could not be certified because of technicalities in the notification requirements, especially when these deficiencies are not the fault of the political subdivision. Giving political subdivisions more options for notifying the public could help get the word out to more potential voters.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative McGaugh; Boone County Fire Protection District; Boone County Missouri;

Brandon Alexander, Missouri State Auditor; Missouri Association of County Clerks and Election Authorities; Missouri Association of School Administrators; Missouri Press Association; Arnie Dienoff; Missouri School Boards' Association; and Missouri Association of Counties.

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.