

HCS HB 2693 -- WATER RESOURCES

SPONSOR: Steinmeyer

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Economic Development by a vote of 12 to 2 with 1 member voting present.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 2693.

Current law prohibits a city from creating a port authority if the city is located within a county that has created a port authority which has received approval as a political subdivision of this State. Under this bill, this will not be construed as invalidating any port authority created by a city and approved as a political subdivision prior to the creation of a port authority by a county (Section 68.010).

If a port authority whose port district includes a constitutional charter city located in four or more counties (Kansas City) must purchase or lease real property anywhere in such counties, the real property will be deemed included within the port district (Section 68.015).

Powers of port authorities are also modified as specified in the bill, including, but not limited to, the grant of powers for the establishment of port rangers licensed as peace officer, and contracting with other port authorities (Section 68.025).

The bill provides that failure of a port authority to include a statement that the State is not liable on bonds of a port authority as required by law will not invalidate the bonds or render the State liable on the bonds (Section 68.040).

Furthermore, the bill modifies provisions regarding the terms of port authority commissioners and their removal from office, as well as determination of commissioners' qualifications, salaries, powers, and duties if they are not determined by the political subdivision establishing the port authority. The political subdivision establishing the port authority must also provide for the filing of annual reports by the board of port authority commissioners, and for periodic independent audits of the port authority's accounts (Section 68.045).

The bill modifies port authorities' contracting processes for work, equipment, and supplies and materials, and provides that

port authorities may utilize additional procurement measures authorized for other political subdivisions, as described in the bill (Section 68.055).

Under this bill, port authority expenditures over \$75,000, rather than over \$25,000, including professional services contracts, must be competitively procured. The bill requires at least 20 days' notice of the letting of the contract, with publication as described in the bill. Port authorities will have the authority to reject any and all bids and readvertise the work or proposed purchase (Section 68.057).

The bill provides that political subdivisions with existing port authorities cannot form regional port authorities themselves, but that the boards of existing port authorities can apply to the Highways and Transportation Commission for approval of a regional port authority, as detailed in the bill (Section 68.060).

The bill amends the definition of "new job" to include an exception for jobs created prior to the date of notice of intent, any job determined by the Department of Economic Development to be eligible for, and approved for, retention of withholding tax under the Missouri works program, provided that the period of benefits under this Section immediately follows the end of the period of benefits under the Missouri works program (Section 68.075).

Under the bill, certain records submitted to a port authority may be deemed closed records, and disclosure to a port authority shall not affect records' status as closed (Section 68.085).

The bill modifies the threshold for consent to the creation of a port improvement district, from 60% per capita to 50% per capita, of the owners of all real property within the boundaries of the proposed port improvement district (Section 68.205).

The bill provides that a petition to the circuit court shall not be required for creation of a port improvement district within port district boundaries or for substantial changes, as defined by law, to a port improvement district in certain circumstances (Section 68.253).

This bill is similar to SB 1146 (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.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that this bill will allow Missouri to increase public safety around ports by giving ports the ability to hire employees that will be given arresting powers. This bill is meant to provide guardrails regarding ports, not preempt local ordinances or laws.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative Steinmeyer; Missouri Port Authority Association; and Port KC.

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.