

HB 2934 -- GOVERNANCE AND FUNDING OF CERTAIN SPORTS COMPLEX  
AUTHORITIES

SPONSOR: Christ

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Special Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs by a vote of 12 to 1. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules-Administrative by a vote of 10 to 0 with 2 members voting present.

This bill modifies the membership of the Regional Convention and Visitors Commission, as specified in the bill, beginning August 28, 20206.

The bill expands the powers of Regional Convention and Visitors Commission, including to exercise all powers, duties, rights, authorities, and obligations of the St. Louis Regional Convention and Sports Complex Authority; to develop, devise, promote, fund, or contribute to the support and development of sports and entertainment attractions; to levy and collect special assessments and taxes; and to levy sales taxes as provided in the bill.

This bill authorizes the Commission to levy one or more special assessments against real property within the boundaries of the convention district upon receipt of a petition signed by owners of real property collectively owning more than 50% of the assessed value within the district and more than 50% per capita of the owners of all real property within the district. The format of the petition is specified in the bill.

The method of allocating special assessments must be specified in the petition, and the commission may establish different classes of property within the district for the purpose of special assessments. A special assessment will constitute a perpetual lien against a property, and the county collector may add the special assessment to the real property tax bill for the property. Any delinquent payment of a special assessment can be collected as provided for delinquent property tax payments, including the sale of delinquent property to satisfy the lien.

A separate fund or account must be created by the commission for each special assessment levied. The fund or account can be used solely to pay the costs incurred in undertaking the specified service project. Upon completion of the service or project as set forth in the petition, the balance remaining in the fund or account will be returned or credited against the amount of the

original assessment of each parcel of property. Any funds in a fund or account that are not needed for current expenditures can be invested by the Commission.

The Commission may, subject to voter approval, impose a sales tax up to 2% on all sales made within the district. The form of ballot is specified in the bill.

This bill repeals the requirement that the St. Louis Regional Convention and Sports Complex Authority design or construct multi-purpose stadiums to meet NFL franchise standards, and that the stadiums be located adjacent to an existing convention facility.

Currently, all funds deposited in the County Convention and Recreation Trust Fund must be disbursed for the payment of the county's share of any rent, fees, or charges payable according to any contract entered into under existing law. This bill provides that any remaining moneys will be annually disbursed to the Regional Convention and Visitors Commission for general revenue purposes.

Currently, the term of state appropriations under any agreement between the Department of Economic Development, the Office of Administration, and any other public body, cannot exceed 20 years. This bill allows any agreement entered into beginning August 28, 2021 and ending on August 28, 2028 cannot exceed 30 years. The bill also limits the annual appropriation to \$4 million.

**PROPOSERS:** Supporters say that this consolidates government bureaucracy and clarifies how taxes are distributed while creating a fiscally sound system for the new district to seek appropriations if it does so. No employees will be lost, and the revenue generated under this bill will allow for vital maintenance of the facilities, which are massive sources of economic activity for the city. Conventions, concerts, and other events consistently fill restaurants and hotels across St. Louis, and if a system isn't put in place now, we risk losing this financial boon or having to come back years down the line to pass legislation to solve more expensive issues. Many community improvement districts across the State operate similarly, and can levy taxes on sales within the district. All members of the two entities joined under this bill support the legislation.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative Christ; Joseph Blanner, St. Louis Regional Convention and Sports Complex

Authority; Brad Dean, St. Louis Convention & Visitors Commission; David Richardson, Husch Blackwell; Greater St. Louis, Inc.; St. Charles County; and Steve O'Loughlin, Lodging Hospitality Management (LHM).

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.