

HJR 172 -- DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

SPONSOR: Mayhew

Currently, the Conservation Commission consists of four members appointed by the Governor with no more than two members from the same political party. Upon voter approval, this constitutional amendment will allow the number, qualifications, and terms of the Commission members to be set by law. The number of commissioners cannot exceed seven, with no more than half of the members from the same political party and each member residing in a different Congressional district, as specified in the bill.

The amendment specifies that if the Governor fails to fill a vacancy on the Commission within 30 days, the remaining members must fill the vacancy by a majority vote from a list of 10 individuals provided by the General Assembly. The General Assembly will develop the list of individuals to fill the vacancy, as specified in the amendment.

The resolution also would prohibit any member from accepting a gift of any value from an individual who receives or has received compensation from or performs a service for the Commission. If a member accepts a gift, the Missouri Ethics Commission (MEC) must investigate, as specified in the bill. If the MEC finds that the member violated the prohibition, the Commission member must forfeit and vacate the office. The MEC must forward its findings to the Attorney General for prosecution.

Anyone who enters into a contract with the Conservation Commission must report, as specified in the amendment, each item, service, or thing of value provided to each member of the Commission or any person related to a Commissioner within the first degree of consanguinity.

The amendment also specifies that beginning on January 1st of the year following the approval, 10% of revenue derived from the Conservation Sales and Use Tax will go for duties and responsibilities of the Division of State Parks within the Department of Natural Resources and 10% for the duties and responsibilities of local political subdivisions in which land owned by the Department of Conservation is located. The resolution specifies the manner in which the portion of the revenues to local political subdivisions is to be distributed.

The amendment also requires the Department of Conservation to pay property taxes on real property in the amount not less than that

private citizens would be required to pay. The General Assembly must also review any proposed sale or purchase of real property by the Department of Conservation prior to the transaction being final.

This bill is similar to HJR 43 (2025).