SS SCS SB 903 -- TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE

SPONSOR: Henderson

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Utilities by a vote of 17 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules-Administrative by a vote of 9 to 0.

This bill modifies the definition of "critical infrastructure facility" to include wireline telecommunication networks, infrastructure, or facilities in addition to wireless telecommunication networks, infrastructure, or facilities.

Currently, a person commits the offense of damage of a critical infrastructure facility if he or she purposely damages, destroys, or tampers with equipment in a critical infrastructure facility. This bill modifies the offense to add if he or she recklessly damages, destroys or tampers with a critical infrastructure facility or removes any component of the facility excluding equipment. Classifications of the offense are specified in the bill and depend on the monetary value of the damages.

Any person who violates these provisions will be required to make restitution and perform community service as specified in the bill.

A person commits the offense of unauthorized possession of certain copper, brass, aluminum, fiber, or telecommunications materials if the person knowingly possesses such metals, fiber, or materials and is not the person authorized, as specified in the bill, to possess them. The offense of unauthorized possession of certain copper, brass, aluminum, fiber, or telecommunications materials is a class E felony, except it is a class D felony if certain circumstances are proven at trial.

This bill is similar to HB 2383 (2026).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that this bill would expand the existing law relating to critical infrastructure to include fiber access cable and criminalize unauthorized possession of copper wire, which is a component of many critical infrastructure facilities. Missouri is ranked 3rd for copper theft, much of which is stolen from internet service providers. The bill would discourage the theft of this copper, which if stolen can impact the response time of businesses and public safety personnel.

Testifying in person for the bill were Senator Henderson; Missouri Association of Municipal Utilities; City Utilities of Springfield; Recycled Material Association; Missouri Cable Television Association; Missouri Railroad Association; Missouri Broadband Providers; At&T; Missouri Chamber of Commerce; Missouri Electric Cooperatives; Verizon; Ameren Missouri; and Missouri Municipal League.

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.