



Missouri House of Representatives

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House Special Committee Passes ‘Homeland Security Act’ to Address Border Crisis

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. – The Missouri House Special Committee on Homeland Security has successfully passed House Committee Substitute (HCS) for HBs 2523, 2367, and 2470, collectively known as the "Homeland Security Act," designed to confront the pressing challenges posed by illegal immigration and the increasing threats to public safety.

Designed as a comprehensive response to the mounting crisis along the nation's southern border, the Homeland Security Act incorporates measures to enhance border security. It leverages Article I, Section 10 of the Constitution, granting Missouri the authority to defend itself against invasion.

Furthermore, the legislation calls for Missouri to collaborate with other states in a united effort to secure the nation's borders. A notable provision establishes the offense of "Trespass by an Illegal Alien," subjecting illegal aliens committing class C misdemeanors or more severe offenses to the heightened penalties of a class C felony.

Representative Hardy Billington, a key advocate for this legislation, underscored the imperative for prompt action, stating, "Millions of illegal aliens are crossing our nation's southern border each year, causing a humanitarian crisis. This invasion has led to an influx of crime, cartel activity, and human and drug trafficking, posing a significant threat to our homeland security."

In addition to addressing illegal immigration, the Homeland Security Act takes aim at the fentanyl crisis by imposing stricter penalties on traffickers distributing the substance resulting in death. Such traffickers could now be charged with murder, with a mandated sentence of either life without parole or the death penalty.

"We want to send a strong message to those coming illegally: if you bring fentanyl to Missouri, you will pay a high price," emphasized Rep. Billington.

Rep. Billington views this legislation as a robust response to what he perceives as the federal government's failure to control illegal immigration, contributing to widespread crime and drug overdoses.

"Since the Biden administration is not doing its job, I believe blood is on their hands from the increase in drugs and crime coming into the country," he declared. "I believe the Biden administration and the left wing of this country want open borders."

Representative Billington credits his colleagues with making this legislation possible. "I would like to thank Chairman Adam Schnelting for championing this bill and making improvements; Representatives Chris Dinkins and Richard West for their significant contributions; and Representatives Jim Murphy and Richard West for traveling with me to the U.S. – Mexico border, where we saw first-hand the crisis of illegal immigration."

Having successfully cleared the Homeland Security committee on Monday, February 19th, the legislation now awaits consideration by a Rules committee. If approved, it will proceed to the House floor for debate.

Representative Hardy Billington, a Republican, represents parts of Butler and Dunklin Counties (District 152) in the Missouri House of Representatives. He was elected to his first two-year term in November 2018. For more information, please contact Rep. Billington's office at 573-751-4039 or via email at Hardy.Billington@House.Mo.Gov.

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