

HCS SCS SB 1250 -- ENFORCEMENT OF IMMIGRATION LAWS

SPONSOR: Alter (Dusenberg)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Special Committee on Immigration Reform by a vote of 13 to 0.

This substitute requires that the Superintendent of the State Highway Patrol designate some or all members of the patrol to be trained in accordance with a memorandum of understanding between Missouri and the United States Department of Homeland Security concerning the enforcement of federal immigration laws on federal highways and interstates in Missouri, subject to appropriations.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2007, FY 2008, and FY 2009.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that many of the bill's provisions are already federal law, and the bill simply creates a disincentive for illegal aliens to remain in the country.

Testifying for the bill were Senator Alter; Kris Kobach; Mid-America Immigration Reform Coalition; Missouri Eagle Forum; Ronny Margason; and Missouri First.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say that it will be detrimental to the strong working relationship between law enforcement and the Latin immigrant community, especially in the area of crime investigation. It will shift law enforcement's focus and duties away from crime solving to immigration status checks. The provisions regarding employment of undocumented workers only deal with public works, so the bill doesn't adequately address the issue.

Testifying against the bill were Missouri Chiefs of Police; Angie O'Gorman, Interfaith Legal Services for Immigrants; Ezequiel Amador III, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Greater Kansas City; Anthony B. Ramirez; Missouri Catholic Conference; Missouri Association for Social Welfare; Linda Callon; Maria Knapp; and Missouri National Education Association.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say certain investigative requirements in the bill will be too complicated for ordinary jailers, and they will not have proper office equipment to accomplish the task. Giving the members of the State Highway Patrol more discretion on whether to hold an illegal alien will be a good thing.

Others testifying on the bill were Missouri Sheriffs' Association; and State Highway Patrol.

Julie Jinkens McNitt, Legislative Analyst