

HCS HJR 64 -- PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION FOR DISABLED PRISONERS OF WAR

SPONSOR: Sutherland (Chappelle-Nadal)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Ways and Means by a vote of 8 to 0.

Upon voter approval, this proposed constitutional amendment exempts all real property used as a homestead by a former prisoner of war who has a total service-connected disability from property taxation.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on General Revenue Fund in FY 2009, FY 2010, and FY 2011. Estimated Cost on Other State Funds of \$0 in FY 2009, \$0 or Less than \$3,625 in FY 2010, and \$0 or Less than \$3,625 in FY 2011.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say there are veterans who cannot afford to pay their property tax. There are 300 POWs from WWII, five from the Vietnam era, and a few from the Korean War who are living in Missouri and would qualify for this exemption. This is a small amount to honor our POWs. Seven states have a similar exemption. The bill only applies to the home of a qualifying POW. Because of the advancing age of these POWs, passing the bill this year is important so that these individuals can receive the benefit. Tax exemption for real property taxation would be a great financial relief for those who carried the burden of free people the world over along with the mental and physical disabilities of their sacrifices from their war experiences. This will help with their increasing medical costs, energy bills, food and housing costs, and other bills. Some key living expenses have outpaced their income.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Chappelle-Nadal; John Clark; Allen Sebol; Gene Wopata; and Paul Dillon.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.