

HCS HB 1848 -- URBAN FARMING TASK FORCE

SPONSOR: Loehner (Holsman)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass by consent" by the Committee on Agriculture Policy by a vote of 9 to 0.

This substitute establishes the Urban Farming Task Force within the Department of Agriculture consisting of 15 members including:

- (1) The Director of the Department of Agriculture, who will serve as chair of the task force;
- (2) The Chair of the Agriculture Policy Committee, or its successor committee, of the House of Representatives;
- (3) The Chair of the Agriculture, Food Production, and Outdoor Resources Committee, or its successor committee, of the Senate;
- (4) One representative of the University of Missouri extension services;
- (5) One member of the House of Representatives representing an urban district, appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;
- (6) One member of the Senate representing an urban district, appointed by the President Pro Tem of the Senate;
- (7) The Director of the University of Missouri Center for Sustainable Energy;
- (8) One representative of the Missouri Botanical Garden;
- (9) One representative of the Missouri Farm Bureau;
- (10) One representative of the Missouri Sustainable Agriculture Association;
- (11) A current operator of an urban farm or community garden;
- (12) One member having expertise or participating in vertical farming;
- (13) One representative of an agricultural organization in this state;
- (14) One representative of the Kansas City Center for Urban Living; and

(15) One member who is a citizen of this state.

All members of the Missouri General Assembly not appointed to the task force will be ex officio members.

The task force must study and make recommendations regarding the impact of urban farm cooperatives, vertical farming, and sustainable living communities in Missouri. The task force is required to hold a minimum of one meeting at three urban regions in Missouri and submit an initial report of its findings and recommendations by December 31, 2010, to the Governor and General Assembly. The task force must continue to meet at least annually in the following two years to evaluate the implementation and impact of its recommendations and provide annual supplemental reports on its findings to the Governor and General Assembly.

The provisions of the substitute expire December 31, 2013.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2011, FY 2012, and FY 2013.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that urban farming could provide for the utilization of unused land and buildings, new jobs and job skills, and use of storm water runoff. Food grown in the city saves on transportation, packaging, refrigeration, and preservative costs while providing inner city residents access to healthy food.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Holsman; Katherine Kelly, Kansas City Center for Urban Agriculture; Gwenn Hayes-Stewart, Gateway Green; Mark Finkhausen, Mayor of Kansas City; Missouri Votes Conservation; and Adam Sanders, Columbia Center for Urban Agriculture.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill gave an overview of its role in urban farming.

Testifying on the bill was Bill McKelvy, University of Missouri Extension Service.