

HB 2724 with HCA 1 -- NOTARIES PUBLIC

SPONSOR: McCann Beatty

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with Amendments" by the Standing Committee on Emerging Issues by a vote of 9 to 0.

This bill specifies that the Secretary of State must maintain a database that includes information contained on each notary public's seal or any lost seal of a notary public. A manufacturer of a notary public seal is required to register with the Secretary of State and notify the Secretary of State when a seal is issued. The Secretary of State must approve any seal issued by the manufacturer within 10 days. A copy of the commission must be maintained by the manufacturer and if a manufacturer violates this provision, they are subject to a \$1,000 fine for each violation.

The bill increases the penalty for acting as, or willfully impersonating, a notary public while not lawfully appointed and commissioned to perform notarial acts from a misdemeanor to a class D felony.

HCA 1: This amendment allows a notary public to electronically sign a notary certificate.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that it can be difficult to recognize forged documents, especially deeds. In many cases the owner of a property does not even realize that his or her property has been fraudulently transferred to another person until years after the fraudulent deed has been filed. A database would assist authorities in investigating suspicious deeds and other questionable notarized documents.

Testifying for the bill were Representative McCann Beatty; Recorders` Association Of Missouri; and Heartland Credit Union Association.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.