

HB 352 -- SPORTS PROJECTS

SPONSOR: Eggleston

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Economic Development by a vote of 11 to 1. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Legislative Oversight by a vote of 8 to 1.

This bill prohibits the expenditure of general revenue funds for professional sports stadiums and related projects unless approved by a vote of the people. The bill does not apply to projects authorized prior to its effective date or to funds necessary to repay bonds authorized prior to the effective date of the bill or which are authorized by the Constitution of this state. Statutes which authorized funds for professional sports stadiums and related projects must specifically cite or repeal the bill. The bill specifically prohibits political subdivisions from passing subsidies, tax credits, tax deductions, and tax exemptions unless approved by a vote of the people.

The bill contains a contingent effective clause requiring 26 specified states out of a set of 32 to enact substantially similar legislation. The Attorney General shall initially make a determination on this condition, but it will ultimately be subject to de novo review in the courts and all citizens of the state shall have jurisdiction to challenge the use of public monies in violation of the bill.

This bill is the same as HB 2485 (2016).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the bill protects state and political subdivisions from the economic scare tactics of professional sports teams. Sports teams and stadiums are carried on public tax dollars, which diverts necessary funds from roads, schools, and other critical governmental functions. Furthermore, political subdivisions rarely recoup on their investments into professional sports stadiums.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Eggleston and Empower Missouri.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.