

HCS HB 596 -- EMBALMERS AND FUNERAL DIRECTORS

SPONSOR: McGaugh

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Judiciary by a vote of 10 to 1.

This bill changes the number of voting public members on the State Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors from one to three. The total number of board members will not change.

Currently, the board conducts investigations, inspections, and financial examinations. This bill authorizes the Division of Finance within the Department of Insurance, Financial Institutions and Professional Registration to conduct inspections, investigations and financial examinations to determine if providers, sellers, and preneed agents have sufficient funds to meet their obligations. The division shall conduct a financial examination at least once every five years.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that people are being defrauded out of funeral costs, and they can seek redress in civil court. While this might not solve the problem, it is time to give accountants the ability to conduct the audits.

Testifying for the bill were Representative McGaugh and Donald Otto, Missouri Funeral Directors and Embalmers Association.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say that the individuals currently conducting the audits are not CPAs, but the supervisor overseeing the audits is.

Testifying on the bill was the Missouri Department of Professional Registration.