

HCS HB 1234 -- TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT ELECTIONS

SPONSOR: Stacy

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Elections and Elected Officials by a vote of 5 to 4.

This bill requires the circuit court to conduct transportation development district director elections in a manner similar to mail-in elections for any registered voters in a district. Registered voters will be sent a mail-in ballot with affidavit by the court after it receives voter information from an election authority. The court may conduct such elections where landowners are also eligible to vote under current law without the use of a mandatory mail-in ballot. Election days are specified in the bill and voter eligibility is determined by either land ownership or registration to vote 45 days prior to an election. If the measure passes, the election authority will provide notice to the court which has authority to authorize the formation of the transportation development district.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the bill will help increase voter turnout and ensure that individuals who live in a district will be able to easily vote. Currently, corporations or persons who are landholders can conduct elections on any day chosen by the court and there is no outreach to residents who are voters by the court.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Stacy; John J. Murphy; and Mark Anthony Jones.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say that voter turnout for district elections is similar to election turnout generally in years and months where there is no general election with federal candidates. Most large projects have good voter turnout, and have proven very successful for the city and district in which they are located. Transportation development districts are a vital part of economic development plans.

Testifying against the bill were Port Kansas City; St. Louis Economic Development Partnership; Kansas City Area Transportation Authority; Kansas City Chamber of Commerce; City of Kansas City; Missouri Economic Development Association; and Tom Gerend, Kansas City Streetcar Authority.