

HCS HB 1873 -- POACHING

SPONSOR: Taylor

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Conservation and Natural Resources by a vote of 8 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Rules- Administrative Oversight Committee by a vote of 14 to 0.

This bill specifies that the court may require any person found guilty of chasing, pursuing, taking, transporting, killing, processing, or disposing of certain wildlife in violation of the Missouri Conservation Commission's rules and regulations to make restitution to the state. The moneys collected will be transferred to the State School Moneys Fund.

This bill is similar to HB 250 (2017).

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the wildlife in the state belongs to all Missourians and when poachers take wildlife illegally, they are stealing from the citizens of the state. Missouri has some of the lowest poaching fines in the country and this bill would increase the fines and reduce poaching.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Taylor; Conservation Federation of Missouri; Jeff Blystone, Missouri Bow Hunters Association; John Burk, National Wild Turkey Federation; and William Morris.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say that many of the poaching citations are processed through the fine collection center and the Wildlife Code violations have some of the highest fines within the center.

Testifying on the bill was the Missouri Department of Conservation.