

HJR 61 -- VETERANS HOME BOND FUND

SPONSOR: Shumake

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Veterans by a vote of 10 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Rules-Legislative Oversight Committee by a vote of 11 to 1.

Upon voter approval, this proposed Constitutional amendment authorizes the issuance of up to \$63 million in bonds to be used solely for the construction of Missouri veterans' homes under the direction of the Missouri Veterans Commission. The bonds must be issued by the State Board of Fund Commissioners over time and in the amounts as determined by the General Assembly. The bonds must be retired serially and by installments within 15 years from their issue date. The proceeds from the sale of the bonds must be deposited into the newly created Veterans Home Bond and Interest Fund and expended for authorized purposes only.

The state is required to retire \$63 million of bonds in order to have the bonding capacity to issue the new bonds and the state cannot issue new bonds until the old bonds are retired.

This bill is similar to HJR 2 (2017).

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that there is a great need for a new veterans' home in Missouri. The legislation would allow the Veteran's Commission to build a new home in a new location or to replace an older existing home.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Shumake; Dewey M. Riehn, Missouri Alliance of Veterans Organizations; VFW; and Tom Goodin, American Legion Department of Missouri.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill discussed other options for providing care for veterans, including using current nursing homes to keep veterans close to home for care.

Testifying on the bill were Pat Rowe Kerr and the Missouri Health Care Association.