

HCS HJR 84 -- SALES TAX FOR HIGHWAY PATROL

SPONSOR: Korman

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Transportation by a vote of 6 to 0.

Upon voter approval, this Constitutional amendment authorizes an additional .4% state sales and use tax on tangible personal property to be deposited into the newly created, Missouri Law Enforcement Fund and the Missouri Local Law Enforcement Fund.

The Missouri Law Enforcement Fund shall receive 90% of the revenues received. This fund can be used solely to provide for the actual costs of an annual audit for all funds raised and the actual costs of the State Highway Patrol for enforcing motor vehicle laws, traffic regulations, or functions specified by the General Assembly.

The Missouri Local Law Enforcement Fund shall receive 10% of the revenues received. The fund shall provide grants to municipal and county law enforcement agencies for training and equipment, jails, salaries, and families of law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty.

If adequate funds are not available from the sales tax, then current funds diverted prior to road fund deposit may be appropriated to the highway patrol. The amendment clarifies that the highway patrol is not a statewide police force.

This bill is similar to SCS SJR 36 (2018).

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the bill will give the patrol a secure source of funding still backed by the prospect of additional appropriations and also provide additional funding to the road fund for transportation purposes. Polling shows that a sales tax to fund the highway patrol may garner more support than fuel tax proposals. The use of a sales tax could solve the inflation problem because the taxed goods increase in price with inflation thereby generating more tax revenue for either transportation or the highway patrol.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Korman; Missouri State Troopers Association; Site Construction Employees Coalition; and the Missouri Dump Truck Association.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say that some funding should be diverted to local law enforcement and used for both infrastructure and salary enhancement.

Testifying against the bill were John Wheeler, Cole County-Office of Sheriff; Missouri Police Chiefs Association; and the Missouri Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Store Association.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say it appears to secure a source of funding for the highway patrol. Budget processes should be monitored to ensure that adequate funding is provided each year.

Testifying on the bill was Colonel Sandra K. Karsten, Missouri State Highway Patrol.