

HCS HBs 161 & 401 -- SCHOOL START DATE

SPONSOR: Knight

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Agriculture Policy by a vote of 15 to 10. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Administrative Oversight by a vote of 6 to 3.

Beginning with school year 2020-21, this bill modifies the law governing school start dates by removing the option that school districts may set an opening date more than 10 calendar days prior to the first Monday in September.

This bill is similar to HB 1826 (2018) and HB 280 (2017).

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that as school start dates have become earlier students who participate in fall sports and agricultural education have had to choose between the two activities. It has hurt more than just those students participating in agricultural education events; it has hurt the tourism industry as well.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Knight; Tri County Lodging Association; Missouri Federation of Animal Owners; Artpho Gallery & Frame; Missouri Hotel & Lodging Association; Silver Dollar City; Darin Keim, Big Surf Waterpark; Jack Glendenning; Missouri Cattlemen's Association; Missouri Association of RV Parks & Campgrounds; and Missouri Canoe & Floaters Association.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that school start dates should be set by the local school board in coordination with the community. A statewide approach does not take into account what is best for the students in each district.

Testifying against the bill were Missouri National Education Association; Missouri State Teachers Association; School Administrators Coalition; and Missouri School Boards' Association.