

HCS SS#2 SCS SB 194 -- UNMANNED AIRCRAFT

SPONSOR: Hoskins (Henderson)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Corrections and Public Institutions by a vote of 8 to 0.

Currently, it is unlawful to possess, deliver, deposit, or conceal certain items in a prison or jail. This bill adds two-way telecommunications devices and their component parts to the list of prohibited items.

This bill provides that the prohibition on telecommunications devices does not apply to law enforcement officers lawfully engaged in their duties or any person who is authorized to use such a device in the facility. However, the bill prohibits any such person from knowingly delivering, attempting to deliver, or depositing a two-way telecommunications device or its component parts to any inmate, prisoner, or detainee. The bill specifies persons to whom the provisions of the bill do not apply.

The bill also creates the offense of unlawful use of an unmanned aircraft near a correctional center, a mental health hospital, or a sports arena, as defined in the bill. A person commits such offense if he or she operates an unmanned aircraft within a vertical distance of 300 feet, extending from ground level, or a horizontal distance to the correctional center's, mental health hospital's, or sports arena's property line or allows an unmanned aircraft to make contact with such a facility, including any person or object on the premises of or within the facility. The bill provides exceptions to the offense.

The offense of unlawful use of an unmanned aircraft is an infraction unless the person uses the unmanned aircraft for the purpose of:

- (1) Delivering a weapon or other article that may be used in such a manner to endanger the life of a person within the facility, in which case it is a class B felony;
- (2) Facilitating an escape from confinement, in which case it's a class C felony; or
- (3) Delivering a controlled substance, in which case it is a class D felony.

Each facility must post a sign of the provisions of the offense. The sign must be at least 11" by 14" and be posted in a conspicuous

location.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that this makes it illegal to fly a drone over a correctional center or mental health hospital but it does not give permission to shoot it down. Since the last hearing on similar legislation, there has been at least one drone incident at a correctional center.

Testifying for the bill were Senator Hoskins; Missouri Department of Corrections; and Mike Whittle, St Louis Cardinals.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.