

HCS SB 196 -- STATE PARKS AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

SPONSOR: Bernskoetter (McGaugh)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Special Committee on Tourism by a vote of 8 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules-Administrative Oversight by a vote of 9 to 0.

Currently, the Department of Natural Resources must use appropriated funds to construct facilities on land under the department's jurisdiction. This bill allows the director to enter into a contract with a donor or a grantor to provide funding for the project.

The bill requires the director to advertise bids in daily or weekly newspapers for concession contracts with an expected gross income of \$25,000 or more. When two bids are comparable preference must be given to a Missouri firm, corporation, or individual.

Currently, a concession contract is only valid for one state park. This bill allows the director to extend the contract to additional state parks if the director determines that the extension is in the best interests of the state park system or facility.

The bill allows the director to issue a commercial use permit, without obtaining sealed bids, to a private person, corporation, or entity to provide services to visitors for a term not to exceed two years. A commercial use permit is limited to an operation with annual gross receipts of not more than \$100,000 from services provided solely within a state park or historic site as specified in the bill.

This bill creates the "Rock Island Trail State Park Endowment Fund" to receive funds for the development of the former Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad Corridor east of milepost 215.325.

The bill authorizes the Department of Natural Resources to award grants to preserve, protect, or restore historic county courthouses and county courthouse grounds through the use of the Historic Preservation Revolving Fund.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the funds for the county courthouses come from the Athletes and Entertainers Tax and while this is not a new program, they want to dedicate a portion for courthouses because of their historic significance. Grants are not awarded for the full cost of the project, but usually in the \$150-\$200K range for specific items of historic significance, like wooden window frames, or copper gutters. Supporters cited the

historic significance, community development, tourism potential, and other positive impacts of restoring these buildings and their grounds.

Testifying for the bill were Senator Bernskoetter; Mark Rhoads, Buchanan County; Historic Revitalization For Missouri; and Rich Germander, Missouri Department of Natural Resources.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.