

HCS HB 1292 -- FERAL HOGS

SPONSOR: Dinkins

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Conservation and Natural Resources by a vote of 8 to 1 with 1 voting present. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Administrative Oversight by a vote of 5 to 2.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 1292.

This bill states that a landowner or the landowner's agent, with verifiable consent from the landowner, may use a night vision, infrared, or thermal imaging device while attempting to take or kill a feral hog on the landowner's property. The bill adds a definition of verifiable consent.

Currently, during firearms deer or turkey season, the Missouri Wildlife Code applies to a person attempting to take a feral hog. This bill removes that requirement.

The following is a summary of the public testimony from the committee hearing. The testimony was based on the introduced version of the bill.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that landowners need to have all tools available to fight feral hogs on their property. The hogs damage fields and crops. Many farmers and landowners work all day and cannot be up all night searching for feral hogs. They need all the tools possible to eradicate the hogs.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Dinkins; Allen Morris; Missouri Farm Bureau; David S Middleton; Brad Parker; Jeff Reed, Missouri Cattlemen's Association; and Rob Elder, Missouri Hunting And Working Dog Alliance.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say the department has seen an increase in poaching of deer as the cost of night vision and thermal imaging devices has decreased. The new Wildlife Code will allow a landowner's agent to use thermal imaging and infrared devices with the permission of the local conservation agent. Others also expressed concerns regarding how the department will use the information it collects when landowner's agents apply for permission.

Testifying on the bill were the Missouri Department of Conservation

and Rick Thompson.