

HCS HB 2273 -- HOME SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

SPONSOR: Deaton

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Downsizing State Government by a vote of 6 to 3. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Legislative Oversight by a vote of 6 to 4.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 2273.

This bill specifies that a school district shall not receive funding under the Foundation Formula if the district is a member of, or remits any funds to, any statewide activities association that prohibits a home school student from participating in any event or activity offered by the school district, or requires a home school student to attend the public school for any portion of a school day in order to participate in any event or activity.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) is required to withhold payments to districts in violation of this bill until such district proves to the State Board of Education (SBE) that the school district has ceased membership in the organization.

This bill further provides that a statewide activities association shall not prohibit or restrict any school district that is a member of the association from participating in any events authorized or regulated by the association with any school that is not a member of the association.

This bill is similar to SB 875 (2020) and SB 130 (2019).

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 it is a fairness issue: home-school families pay taxes that go to school districts without ever receiving any benefit from them. What is the downside of allowing home-schooled children and teens to participate in school activities such as sports, band, speech and debate, etc.?

Testifying for the bill were Representative Deaton; Jonah Spieker; Xie Ferguson; Ezekiel Spieker; and Keith Shepherd.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say they question the difference between extracurricular and co-curricular activities.

Testifying on the bill were Family Covenant Ministries; Missouri Alliance for Arts Education; and Families for Home Education.