

HB 652 -- MISSOURI FARMERS' NUTRITION PROGRAM

SPONSOR: Stevens (46)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rural Community Development by a vote of 13 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Legislative Oversight by a vote of 9 to 0.

This bill allows the Department of Agriculture to apply for a grant under the US Department of Agriculture Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Farmers' Market Nutrition Program to allow pregnant and postpartum women to obtain food at eligible farmers' markets.

This bill is similar to HB 1666 (2020) and HB 752 (2019).

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that this program would help both Missouri farmers and pregnant women and their young children to have greater access to fresh produce. The vouchers are covered by the federal government, the state only has to cover the administrative expenses, so it is a very inexpensive way to improve health and eating habits for many families.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Stevens; Missouri Soybean Association; Missouri State Alliance of YMCAs; Health Forward Foundation; American Heart Association; Missouri Park and Recreation Association; National Association of Social Workers-Missouri Chapter; and the Missouri Nurse Association.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill discussed the fiscal impact of the program to the Department, including the Department's request for an additional employee to manage the program.

Testifying on the bill was the Missouri Department of Agriculture.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.