

HCS HB 784 -- LEGISLATURE SECURITY

SPONSOR: Roberts

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Crime Prevention by a vote of 9 to 1. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Administrative Oversight by a vote of 7 to 0.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 784.

This bill authorizes the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President Pro Tem of the Senate to appoint "House marshals" or "Senate Marshals" to serve their respective house of the General Assembly. Marshals may provide physical security, serve papers, and otherwise assist members as deemed appropriate. Marshals shall have at least five years' experience as a law enforcement officer and maintain a peace officer license. Together with the sergeant-at-arms, marshals may serve process, wear a concealable firearm, and make arrests based upon state law.

The Missouri House of Representatives and the Missouri Senate are authorized to commission peace officers to serve as sergeant-at-arms, deputy sergeant-at-arms, or house marshals. Such officers must take and subscribe an oath of office before an officer authorized to administer oaths. The oath will be filed in the office of the Clerk of the House or the office of the Secretary of the Senate. The Clerk of the House or the Secretary of the Senate will give each appointed officer a certificate of appointment, which will empower the officer with the same authority to maintain order, preserve peace, and make arrests as is now held by law enforcement officers.

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

PROponents: Supporters say that this creates a uniform marshal service for the House and the Senate, and the commissioned officers will have the same authority granted any other police officer. This would relieve other local agencies of the responsibility to maintain the security of the House and the Senate. The world we are living in has changed and this would, at the very worst, add a level redundancy to the safety and security of the chambers.

Testifying for the bill was Representative Roberts.

OPponents: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

