

HB 351 -- OFFICIAL STATE INVERTEBRATE

SPONSOR: Wood

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass by consent" by the Special Committee on Tourism by a vote of 12 to 0.

This bill designates the crayfish, also known as the crawfish or crawdad, as the official state invertebrate.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2008, FY 2009, and FY 2010.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that crayfish are among the most common and important animals in Missouri's waterways. Crayfish are an important food source for Missouri's game fish. Crayfish are sensitive to water pollution and can be used to monitor the cleanliness of our water supply. They are found throughout Missouri.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Wood; Karlie Besendorfer; Andrea K. Studer; Bryanna N. Parham; Kayla J. Kozer; and Janna Elfrink.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say that crayfish are a keystone species that contribute greatly to our natural resources and Missouri's economy. They keep our waterways clean and are also food for game fish found in Missouri, such as largemouth bass. Many children become familiar with crayfish when they first start exploring nature, and this makes them a great learning tool and ideal candidate for the official state invertebrate.

Testifying on the bill was Department of Natural Resources.