

HB 71 -- CITY OF ST. LOUIS POLICE FORCE (Nasheed)

COMMITTEE OF ORIGIN: Committee on Urban Issues

Currently, the state oversees the police force for the City of St. Louis through the St. Louis Board of Police Commissioners. This bill allows the city to establish and maintain a municipal police force under its own authority and provides for the employment of the officers and employees of the current police force and the continuation of their salaries, benefits, and pension plan, as well as the continuation of any regulations regarding residence. Any retired officer must maintain his or her accrued benefits.

The bill prohibits:

- (1) A person from soliciting a police officer or employee of the St. Louis Police Force for a political contribution;
- (2) An officer or employee from promoting or demoting any other officer or employee who refuses to contribute or render any political service;
- (3) An officer or employee from using his or her official authority or influence to interfere with any election or nomination;
- (4) An officer or employee from being a member or official of a political party committee or serving as a ward committeeman or committeewoman;
- (5) An officer or employee from soliciting any person to vote a particular way, polling precincts, or doing any political work for a political organization, party, or candidate;
- (6) An officer or employee from placing signs or bumper stickers on department property in support or opposition to a ballot issue or candidate;
- (7) Police examinations from having any questions relating to political or religious opinions or affiliations and employment decisions from being affected by a person's opinions or affiliations; and
- (8) A person from soliciting or accepting money or services for employment decisions or from obstructing or aiding a candidate for employment or promotion.

Any officer or employee who is found by the board to have violated these provisions will be discharged from service,

prosecuted, and subject to a fine of between \$50 and \$500, imprisonment for up to six months, or both.

An officer or employee who knowingly attempts to influence a licensed firearm dealer or a private seller of firearms or ammunition to transfer a firearm or ammunition unlawfully or who knowingly provides false information to a dealer or seller will be guilty of a class D felony. An officer or employee who procures another person to engage in prohibited conduct under this provision will be held accountable as a principal.

The police department is prohibited from allowing any officer, employee, liaison, or registered representative to testify or lobby before the General Assembly representing the official policy of the department or representing himself or herself by wearing a uniform, stating his or her rank and title, or using departmental letterhead when giving testimony. An officer or employee may however address the General Assembly in a personal capacity. This provision may be enforced by an action brought by any person for monetary damages in an amount of \$10,000. The state waives all its immunity with regard to the police department in these provisions, and the department will bear full liability for any violation.

Provisions relating to the board will expire upon the effective date of the bill.

The bill contains a nonseverability clause.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on General Revenue Fund in FY 2012, FY 2013, and FY 2014. Estimated Net Income on Other State Funds of Unknown in FY 2012, FY 2013, and FY 2014.