

HB 152 -- SCHOOL OFFICERS

SPONSOR: Solon

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Committee on Crime Prevention and Public Safety by a vote of 13 to 2.

Currently, the school district of Blue Springs is authorized to commission school law enforcement officers to enforce laws relating to crimes committed on school premises, at school activities, and on school buses through a memorandum of understanding with each law enforcement agency with enforcement jurisdiction over the school district's premises and location of school activities. This bill allows any school district to commission peace officers for these purposes.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the bill is working well in Blue Springs, so expanding the ability to hire law enforcement officers in other school districts in the state makes sense. Having a law enforcement officer at the school provides greater flexibility; their presence prevents dangerous events from occurring and eliminates the expense of hiring outside safety personnel. The law enforcement officers can provide extra services, such as conducting emergency management training and checking on the residency status of students. Law enforcement officers will be required to be thoroughly trained and experienced.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Solon; Tom Phillips, Blue Springs School District, Division of Public Safety; Mike Lodewegen, School Administrators Coalition; Missouri Police Chiefs Association; Missouri School Boards Association; and Missouri Sheriffs Association.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.