

HB 834 -- LAND ACQUISITION BY STATE AGENCIES

SPONSOR: Ross

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Conservation and Natural Resources by a vote of 7 to 5.

This bill prohibits state agencies from purchasing or receiving donated land without approval of the General Assembly.

The provisions of this bill do not apply to the Missouri Department of Transportation.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that currently the General Assembly must approve the encumbrance or sale of any land owned by the state. This bill would require the General Assembly to also approve the purchase or acceptance of any land by the state. When the state is gifted land, it must still pay the cost of maintaining the land and structures on the land and therefore, the General Assembly should have a say in the purchase or acceptance of it.

Testifying for the bill was Representative Ross.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say that state agencies, especially the Department of Conservation, should maintain control of land purchases and gifts to ensure proper conservation of land within the state. Opponents also were concerned that public universities would also have to submit land gifts and purchases for the purpose of the university's fund raising to the General Assembly.

Testifying against the bill were Mark Whittington; Missouri Southern State University; Lincoln University; and Conservation Federation Of Missouri.