

HCS HB 978 -- CERTAIN MARIJUANA OFFENDERS PAROLE

SPONSOR: Dogan

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with Amendments" by the Standing Committee on Corrections by a vote of 11 to 0. Voted "Do Pass with Amendments" by the Select Committee on Judiciary by a vote of 10 to 0.

This bill requires that any prisoner serving a sentence of life without parole for a marijuana offense will be eligible for parole. The Board of Probation and Parole within the Department of Corrections must schedule a parole hearing for any prisoner serving a sentence of life without parole for a marijuana offense within 15 days of the effective date of this bill.

This bill contains an emergency clause.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that this bill only applies to one person and the governor has failed to act in this matter. They feel that the punishment doesn't fit the crime. The offender has served 21 years in prison and supporters believe he has paid his debt to society and should be released.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Dogan; Janet Uplinger; Michael Mizanskey; Chris Mizanskey; Dan Viets; Kelsey Smith; Lynne Schlosser; Adela Falk; Joann Mizanskey; and ACLU of Missouri.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.