

HCS HB 1275 -- LOCAL BALLOT PROPOSALS

SPONSOR: Koenig

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Ways and Means by a vote of 7 to 4.

This substitute specifies that a proposal by any political subdivision to enact a tax or issue a bond for any purpose that is submitted to and rejected by the voters may be resubmitted at any time in the immediately following four years but the proposal will not become effective unless it is approved by at least 60% of the qualified persons voting on the proposal. If the proposal is resubmitted after the four-year period, the proposal must become effective if a majority of the qualified voters are in favor of the proposal. These provisions will not apply to any proposal to enact any tax or to issue any bond for which the subdivision has a budget need because of an Environmental Protection Agency federal mandate or a Governor-proclaimed disaster or emergency.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2013, FY 2014, and FY 2015.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the bill protects taxpayers from the resubmission of a ballot issue multiple times by increasing the percentage necessary for passage. The bill prevents local entities from trying to wear the taxpayers down until they finally vote yes. While the bill may make it harder to pass a local ballot issue, the local government needs to respect the vote of the people. There have been local ballot issues resubmitted up to nine times until passed.

Testifying for the bill was Representative Koenig.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill are concerned with an upcoming federal mandate to improve a sewer system which may need to be before the voters more than once in order to clarify what is needed.

Testifying on the bill was Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District.