

HCS HB 1823 -- COUNTY HEALTH ORDINANCES

SPONSOR: McGaugh

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with Amendments" by the Standing Committee on Agriculture Policy by a vote of 10 to 4. Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Select Committee on Agriculture by a vote of 6 to 3.

Currently, both county commissions and county health center boards may make and establish orders, ordinances, rules or regulations under certain circumstances, but cannot conflict with any rules or regulations of the Department of Health and Senior Services or the Department of Social Services. This bill requires the county commission and the county health center board to be in concurrence when establishing health orders, ordinances, rules or regulations, except in the case of an emergency.

This bill is similar to HB 999 (2015).

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that laws and ordinances should be based on sound science and not emotion. This bill would require county health ordinances related to agriculture to be no stricter than the statutes and regulations governing the Department of Natural Resources, which are based on science. The bill would also require the county commission to approve the ordinances promulgated by the health center boards since some health center boards are not elected.

Testifying for the bill were Representative McGaugh; Missouri Farm Bureau; Missouri Pork Association; Missouri Soybean Association; Bill McLaren; and the Missouri Poultry Federation.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that this bill would limit local control by not allowing a county to be stricter than the statutes and regulations of the Department of Natural Resources. Some counties do not feel that the state laws are protective enough of their citizens.

Testifying against the bill were Melanie Hutton, Cooper County Public Health Center; Brian Smith, Missouri Rural Crisis Center; Missouri Association Of Counties; and Gary Jungerman, Callaway County.