

HB 1931 -- PREVAILING WAGE

SPONSOR: Love

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Workforce Standards and Development by a vote of 6 to 2. Voted "Do Pass" by the Select Committee on Labor and Industrial Relations by a vote of 6 to 3.

This bill repeals Missouri's prevailing wage law. Currently, contractors and subcontractors working on public works projects are required to pay employees the prevailing wage for the particular locality in which the project is being completed. This bill changes the law to require contractors and subcontractors to pay employees state or federal minimum wage, whichever is higher. Contractors and subcontractors would be permitted to pay higher than the minimum wage if they chose, but that would not be a requirement. This does not apply to any work done for or by any drainage or levee district.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that this will rebuild Missouri and allow us to engage in qualified bidding. It is unlikely that only minimum wage would be paid, and the quality of work will not suffer. Supporters also say that prevailing wage serves the special interest, and most small businesses cannot afford to pay the prevailing wage. The market sets the wage, not the employers.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Love; Americans For Prosperity; L. Hunter Kevil; William "Bill" H. Gabel; and Bruce Hillis.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say that prevailing wage allows people to compete against each other fairly, and this has worked well for Missouri for years. Opponents also say that this would affect the state financially, and it is going to destroy the workforce. Opponents also say that there is no indication that Missouri's current prevailing wage law is unfair, and workers want to make sure they are receiving a fair wage. Furthermore, repealing prevailing wage would make the quality of work product decline.

Testifying against the bill were Missouri Electrical Conference; Sheet Metal/Air/Rail/Transportation (Smart); Jeff Aboussie, St. Louis Building Trades; Plumbers & Pipefitters Local #562; Missouri Laborers` Legislative Committee; Missouri NAACP; Mark Dalton, St. Louis-Kansas City Carpenters Regional Council; Construction Employers Coalition; David J. Klarich, Mechanical Contractors Association-Eastern Missouri; Mechanical Contractors Association Of Kansas City; Empower Missouri; Associated General Contractors Of

Missouri; Site Improvement Association; Missouri Afl-Cio; International Union Of Painters And Allied Trades District Council # 3; International Union Of Painters And Allied Trades District Council#58; Afl-Cio; Heavy Constructors Association Of Greater Kansas City; and the Missouri National Education Association.