

HB 2276 -- LOBBYING EXEMPTIONS

SPONSOR: Curtis

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Workforce Standards and Development by a vote of 7 to 3.

This bill removes certain labor unions from the exemptions to the general lobbyist registration requirements of Chapter 105, RSMo. Therefore, union members who undertake any lobbying activities or duties as defined in Chapter 105 will now be required to register as lobbyists with the Missouri Ethics Commission.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the community wants to remove anything that resembles privilege to remove any undue influence, and unions should not be exempt from that policy.

Testifying for the bill was Representative Curtis.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say that this would cut down on the freedom expressed in this building, and people should not have to register as lobbyists if they have been doing something all along that they suddenly start getting paid to do. It is better to leave the union exemption in place and to allow union members to remain a special circumstance. Union members are exempt because they come to the Capitol as everyday working people, whereas lobbyists are in a position of power.

Testifying against the bill were AFT Missouri; Missouri AFL-CIO; Natasha Pickens, Communication Workers Of America 6355; Van Simpson, Coalition Of Black Trade Unionist; George Miller, Jr., Coalition Of Black Unionist; Missouri AFL-CIO; and John Bowman, Sr., Coalition Of Black Unionists.