

HCS HJRS 48, 46 & 47 -- ETHICS

SPONSOR: Plocher

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on General Laws by a vote of 8 to 4. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Legislative Oversight by a vote of 6 to 2.

Upon voter approval, this proposed Constitutional amendment modifies laws pertaining to the influence of special interest groups on the state legislature. In its main provisions, the resolution:

- (1) Repeals an existing exception to the lobbyist gift ban for members of the General Assembly that allows small gifts of under \$5.00 so that no gifts from lobbyists or lobbyist principals to members of the General Assembly will be allowed;
- (2) Repeals provisions relating to the use of a nonpartisan state demographer to draw redistricting maps using mathematical formulas based on partisan fairness and competitiveness;
- (3) Creates separate House and Senate independent bipartisan citizens commissions to draw redistricting maps beginning 60 days after the annual census report;
- (4) Establishes the following redistricting criteria:
 - (a) Districts should be composed of contiguous territory as compact as may be such that they approximate squares, rectangles, or hexagons to the extent permitted by natural or political boundaries;
 - (b) Districts should achieve partisan fairness and, secondarily, competitiveness where these criteria are further specified in the resolution;
- (5) Specifies a procedure for gubernatorial appointment of six member House and Senate bipartisan redistricting committees. The process of selection allows each of the two major political parties to nominate candidates using majority votes of their congressional district committees and state committees. Congressional committees submit two candidates and state committees submit five with the Governor selecting two from each state committee and one member from those nominated by the political party congressional district committees. Additional criteria for service as a member on the committees or selection of members if the political party committees fail to nominate candidates is specified in the

resolution. Bipartisan commissions will always have equal numbers of members from the two political parties receiving the most votes in past elections and the same person is barred from service on more than one bipartisan committee;

(7) Requires the bipartisan committees to meet within 15 days, excluding Sundays and state holidays, of appointment to select officers, adopt an agenda, and file a tentative plan of apportionment and map with the Secretary of State within five months after appointment. Public hearings will be held after filing and a final map will be filed within six months of appointment which must be approved by seven-tenths of the commission members; and

(8) Specifies that a panel of appellate judges will create a redistricting map if a bipartisan commission fails to agree by the requisite seven-tenths vote. Deadlines and requirements for the map are further specified in the resolution.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the resolution clarifies Amendment 1 ethics provisions by removing a small exception to the lobbyist gift ban and setting equivalent campaign finance limits for members of the House and Senate.

Testifying for the bill was Representative Plocher.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say that it should not be used as a vehicle to modify the amendment just adopted by the voters in 2018 regulating gerrymandering. Voters overwhelmingly preferred the Clean Missouri plan to promote competitive elections in as many districts as possible. The new redistricting system has not yet been implemented and should be given a chance to function before being modified.

Testifying against the bill were Cynthia Gardner, Missouri Faith Voices; Susan Gibson; Martha J. Jolly, Missouri Faith Voices; and Deadra Rounds, Service Employees International Union Local 1.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say there is overwhelming support for Amendment 1 which passed by 62% and that uses criteria such as "partisan fairness" to prevent gerrymandering. Possible changes to the resolution could undermine the will of the people. Some changes to ethics provisions alone might be plausible so long as the redistricting process is unmodified.

Testifying on the bill were Megan Korsi; Ronald Nelson; Jacob Walker, Missouri Health Care For All; Wayne Lee; Nicole Lynch, Empower Missouri; Doyle Sager, First Baptist Church; Angela Allen; Susan Schmalzbauer; Mary L Christian; Aura Aguilar; Michael Lester;

Salaam Enani; Wilson Vance; Jana Lester; James Roos; Christine Doerr, Sierra Club-Osage Group; Wes Korfe, Sierra Club; Linda Graue; Megan Johnson; Christopher Smith; Nancy Miller, League of Women Voters of Missouri; and Melissa Alper, National Council of Jewish Women-St Louis.