

HCS HB 1293 -- SEXUAL OFFENDERS

SPONSOR: Dinkins

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Special Committee on Criminal Justice by a vote of 8 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Administrative Oversight by a vote of 8 to 0.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 1293.

Currently, Tier I sexual offenses include child molestation in the second degree under Section 566.098, RSMo, as it existed prior to January 1, 2017, if the punishment is less than one year. This bill changes the provision to include the offense if the offense is a misdemeanor.

The following is a summary of the public testimony from the committee hearing. The testimony was based on the introduced version of the bill.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that this is a technical fix for the sexual offender registry. A category of offenders was inadvertently left off the list and, because of that, they ended up on Tier III of the registry, which requires being on the registry for life. It is unclear how many people this change would affect. Department of Public Safety would prefer the language be changed to "if the offense is a misdemeanor" rather than specifying a term of imprisonment because then the tier system will not rely on how long a person served or was sentenced to. Offenders who fall into this loophole suffer greatly, and so do their families. They are restricted on the kinds of activities they can participate in and they just want to get on with their lives and be contributing members of society. This helps Missouri take a step forward, especially since the registry itself can deprive people of the right to due process.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Dinkins; American Civil Liberties Union of Missouri; and Darwin Rouse.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.