

HJR 60 -- INITIATIVE PETITION SIGNATURES

SPONSOR: Billington

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Elections and Elected Officials by a vote of 4 to 2. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Legislative Oversight by a vote of 7 to 3.

Currently, initiative petitions proposing amendments to the Constitution shall be signed by 8% of the legal voters in each of two-thirds of the congressional districts in the state.

Upon voter approval, this proposed Constitutional amendment requires that signatures of the legal voters making up the 8% shall represent every congressional district in the state.

This bill is similar to HJR 10 (2019).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that this bill modifies the signature requirement of the initiative petition process. Signatures are gathered in populated areas and not rural areas therefore rural districts are not being properly represented.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Billington; Missouri Pork Association; and the Missouri Soybean Association.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that about half of all the states have an initiative petition process. Initiative petition allows people to get what they need when the political process doesn't provide it. This bill makes it borderline impossible to get the will of the people accomplished with a change in the constitution and makes it expensive to gather the increased amount of required signatures over more miles.

Testifying against the bill were American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations; United Steelworkers; American Federation of Teachers Missouri; Arnie C. "AC" Dienoff; Missouri National Education Association; Frances Klahr, Sierra Club; United for Missouri's Nearly 80,000 Members; Cozad Company, LLC; and First Rule.