

HJR 15 -- INITIATIVE PETITIONS

SPONSOR: Lewis (6)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Elections and Elected Officials by a vote of 7 to 3.

Upon voter approval, this proposed Constitutional amendment would require that initiative petitions to amend the Constitution be signed by 12% of the legal voters in each of two-thirds of the Congressional districts in the state.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that signature gathering should reflect a larger percentage of voters. It would also be useful to expand the geographic area for signature collection. The 12% figure would increase signature gathering by approximately 100,000 persons.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Lewis; Missouri Cattlemen'S Association; Opportunity Solutions Project; and the Missouri Soybean Association.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that it is already quite difficult to collect signatures. The proposed amendment would only increase costs modestly for large political organizations, but could prove to be an obstacle for small grassroots organizations seeking to place a measure on the ballot.

Testifying against the bill were Alice Barber; Barbara Beier; United for Missouri; Frances Farah; Missouri AFL-CIO; Jahnavi Delmonico; Richard G Von Glahn, Missouri Jobs with Justice Voter Action; Sarah Starnes; Stephen Davey; Susan Gibson; Melissa Vatterott, Missouri Coalition for the Environment; John Saxton; Arnie Dienoff; Padraic McGrath; Brian Wingbermuehle; Planned Parenthood Advocates in Missouri; Stephanie A. Clarke; Missouri Budget Project; Carly Langlois; Gene Davison; Jenny; Shelley Swoyer; Susan Keturah Schmalzbauer; Tony Smith; Collins F Chetwin; Lisa Ann Williams; Margie Richcreek; Sierra Club Missouri Chapter; Kevin Fitzgerald; Jobs with Justice Voter Action.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.