

HCS HB 247 -- PUBLIC SAFETY SALES TAX

SPONSOR: Hurlbert

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Local Government by a vote of 12 to 1.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 247.

This bill creates, modifies, and repeals numerous provisions of law relating to public safety sales taxes.

CITY SALES TAX FOR PUBLIC SAFETY (Section 94.905)

Under this bill, the governing body of any city is authorized to impose, upon voter approval, a sales tax in the amount of up to .05% for the purpose of improving public safety for the city, including expenditures on equipment, city employee salaries and benefits, and facilities for police, fire, and emergency medical providers.

Any city with a public safety sales tax in effect prior to August 28, 2023, may:

- (1) Continue to impose the public safety sales tax previously authorized; or
- (2) Impose a new public safety sales tax as provided under this bill; however, such city shall not enact a new public safety sales tax under this bill without discontinuing any public safety sales tax authorized prior to August 28, 2023.

The provisions of this bill shall not be construed as an authorization upon any sales tax previously authorized.

This provision shall not apply to any county with more than 1 million inhabitants, which at the time of enactment applies only to St. Louis County.

SALES TAX FOR FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES (Section 321.900)

Under this bill, the governing body of any fire protection district, or the governing body of any municipality having a municipal fire department or contracting for fire protection services is authorized to impose, upon voter approval, a sales tax in the amount of up to .05% for the operation of the fire protection district, the municipal fire department, or the municipal contract for fire protection services.

Any fire protection district or municipality with a public safety sales tax in effect prior to August 28, 2023, may:

(1) Continue to impose the public safety sales tax previously authorized; or

(2) Impose a new public safety sales tax as provided under this bill; however, a fire protection district or municipality must not enact a new public safety sales tax under this section without discontinuing any public safety sales tax authorized prior to August 28, 2023.

The provisions of this bill shall not be construed as an authorization upon any sales tax previously authorized.

This provision shall not apply to any county with more than 1 million inhabitants, which at the time of enactment applies only to St. Louis County.

REPEAL AND REFERENCES TO CURRENT SALES TAX LAWS (Sections 94.900, 94.902, 94.903, 144.518, 321.241, 321.242, 321.244, and 321.246)

This bill repeals Sections 94.900, 94.902, 94.903, 321.241, 321.242, and 321.246, RSMo.

Additionally, this bill removes references to such sections in Sections 144.518 and 321.244.

This bill is similar to HB 2214 (2022).

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

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that limiting the number of tax authorizations is good.

Testifying in person for the bill was Representative Hurlbert.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that there are concerns with limiting elections to November because of misconceptions about April elections.

Testifying in person against the bill was the Missouri Municipal League.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say the sales tax could be a good source of revenue for fire districts.

Testifying in person on the bill was the Municipal League of Metro St. Louis.

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