

HCS HJR 86 -- RIGHT TO RAISE ANIMALS

SPONSOR: Loehner

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Agriculture Policy by a vote of 11 to 1.

Upon voter approval, this constitutional amendment, in order to protect Missouri's agricultural economy, affirms the right of Missouri citizens to raise domestic animals in a humane manner that promotes the health and survival of the animals without the state imposing an undue economic burden on their owners. No law criminalizing or regulating crops or the welfare of animals will be valid unless based upon generally accepted scientific principles and enacted by the General Assembly.

FISCAL NOTE: Not available at time of printing.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the livestock business is getting smaller both in the number of animals and the number of livestock producers. This trend is due in part to the influences of persons and groups with no practical knowledge of animal husbandry or accepted practices regarding the care and treatment of animals. Retaining current producers and attracting new ones are essential to supplying high-quality affordable meat and meat products. It is a key component of Missouri's economy and the health and welfare of Missouri's citizens.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Loehner; and Missouri Federation of Animal Owners.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say that it is not necessary and protects bad actors in animal agriculture. If passed, it could result in numerous law suits regarding zoning. The bill is an attempt by producers to escape regulation while disregarding the health and safety of the public.

Testifying against the bill was Dale Bartlet, United States Humane Society.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill support the intent but not the wording. The limiting of herd size and animal facility expansion and increased production costs will adversely affect not only producers but consumers as well.

Testifying on the bill were Representative Smith (150); Missouri Farm Bureau; and Missouri Cattlemens Association.