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HOUSE COMMITTEE HEARS SENATE BILL ON BANNING SEXUALLY-ORIENTED MESSAGES ON BILLBOARDS: The House Transportation Committee heard testimony April 14 on a Senate Bill that would prohibit sexually-oriented messages on billboards in Missouri. Senate Bill 870 is sponsored by Sen. Matt Bartle, R-Lee's Summit.

If an adult cabaret or sexually-oriented business is located within one mile of a state highway, the business could display a maximum of two exterior signs displaying only the name, address, phone number and operating hours of the business and a notice that minors are not allowed on the premises. Those signs would be limited to 40 square feet and can display only the name, address, telephone number and operating hours of the business. Signs existing before the effective date of the legislation would not have to comply with the new law for three years.

Testifying in favor of the bill were:

- George Burrus, Missouri Outdoor Advertising Association
- Carry Messer, Missouri Family Network
- Janet Englebach, Missouri Eagle Forum
- Bev Ehler, Concerned Women for America of Missouri

No one testified against the bill.

No action was taken on the legislation.

STAGGERED MOTOR CARRIER REGISTRATION BILL APPROVED BY SENATE COMMITTEE: A bill that would make the motor carrier registration process more efficient was approved April 14 by the Senate Transportation Committee. Senate Committee Substitute for House Bills 928, 1123 and 1280 is sponsored by Sen. Jon Dolan, R-Lake St. Louis.

The bill would allow motor carriers to register their vehicles throughout the year to more evenly distribute the workload involved in the registration process. Currently, motor-carrier registration can be done only during the last quarter of the year.

The staggered registration proposal is one of the MHTC's legislative priorities for the 2004 session.

The bill also would transfer the state statutes regulating commercial motor vehicle registration from the Highway Reciprocity Commission to the Missouri Highways and Transportation

Commission. The registration process was transferred last year to the MHTC as a result of a 2002 executive order by Gov. Bob Holden to streamline the state's motor carrier services.

The bill also addresses a driver's license issue. If an intermediate driver's license expires on a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday, the license would remain valid for five more business days.

In addition, the bill would require 200 applications for a special license plate and a fee of up to \$5,000 to help defray the cost of developing, implementing and issuing a special license plate before the director of the Department of Revenue can authorize the manufacturing of the plate.

The bill now goes to the full Senate for consideration.

SENATE COMMITTEE HEARS TESTIMONY ON UNMARKED BURIAL REMAINS:

The Senate Governmental Organizations, Veterans and Elections Committee heard testimony April 13 on several transportation-related bills, including a proposal that would change the law governing unmarked burial remains. Senate Bill 943 is sponsored by Sen. Wayne Goode, D-St. Louis.

Currently no construction can be delayed for more than 30 days after the discovery of an unmarked human burial ground or skeletal remains. The bill would provide that additional delays of up to 30 days would be allowed with the consent of all people affected by the delay or by a court order. Under the bill, when any burial site appears to be that of a Native American, the state historic preservation officer must comply with the Native American Grave Protection and Repatriation Act. If the preservation officer assumes jurisdiction over a burial site, the private or public owner would have the right to continue construction or other activities after they comply with the provisions in the law. If the activities would result in further disturbance of the site, the preservation officer could remove the remains and objects from the site. The owner of the remains and objects would be responsible for the cost of moving them.

The bill creates civil penalties for anyone violating the law. The penalty for individuals would be \$1,000. The penalty for corporations and other groups would be \$10,000.

Testifying in support of the bill were:

- Tim Bowman, a professor and anthropologist at the University of Missouri-St. Louis
- Sarah Parker, Department of Natural Resources
- Dr. Bob Reeder, MoDOT

Testifying against the bill were:

- Jack Atterberry, Associate General Contractors, who supports the current law but opposes the bill because it extends the time allowed for the study of unmarked burial sites. The delay increases the cost of highway construction projects because equipment sits idle while the study is conducted.
- Leslie Holloway, Farm Bureau, who was concerned the bill would limit landowner rights and could be applied to farmers and include "cultural items" that might be plowed up by farmers working their land. She said the bill is too broad, and farmers should be exempted from its provision.

No action was taken on the bill.

HOUSE COMMITTEE APPROVES LICENSE PLATE BILL: The House Transportation Committee approved a bill April 14 that would change the process for creating special license plates in Missouri. House Committee Substitute for House Bill 1582 is sponsored by Rep. Charles Schlottach, R-Owensville.

The bill would give the Joint Committee on Transportation Oversight the duty of approving or denying applications for special license plates.

Organizations, except those seeking a special military license plate, would be required to submit an application to the Department of Revenue that describes the proposed license plate, has at least one current member of the General Assembly as a sponsor, include a list of at least 100 potential applicants and an application fee not to exceed \$5,000 to defray the department's cost for reviewing the application and developing the special license plate.

The fee for all specialty license plates, except special military plates, would be \$25 annually or \$50 biannually in addition to the regular registration fees.

The bill also would:

- Establish a \$5 penalty per month up to a maximum of \$50 for delinquent registrations.
- Require the Department of Revenue to issue new license plates every four years beginning Jan. 1, 2006.
- Create a uniform registration fee of \$29.75.
- Establish a one-time registration fee of \$50 or an annual fee of \$10 for trailers and semi-trailers. Cars, sport utility vehicles and pickup trucks pulling trailers would pay an annual towing permit fee of \$25.

The House Transportation Committee also approved a bill to establish a special license plate for the American Heart Association. House Bill 1666 is sponsored by Rep. Marilyn Ruestmann, R-Joplin.

The bills now go to the full House for consideration.

HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE HEARS NUMEROUS BILLS: The House Transportation Committee heard testimony April 14 on a number of transportation-related bills:

- Senate Bill 771, sponsored by Sen. Joan Bray, D. St. Louis, would allow operators of low-speed vehicles to use certain public highways having speed limits of 35 miles per hour or less. David Scobey, representing Daimler Chrysler, testified in support of the bill.
- Senate Bill 772, sponsored by Sen. Bray, would allow certain commercial transportation vehicles and railroad passenger cars to use alternately flashing warning signals when they are stopped to load or unload passengers.

- Senate Bill 757, sponsored by Sen. Charlie Shields, R- St. Joseph, would modify the law for “driveway operation” to include the movement of any vehicle by people who are in the business of transporting or delivering vehicles by the driveway or towaway methods from the point of manufacture, assembly or distribution to a dealer or sales agent of a manufacturer.
- Senate Bill 824, sponsored by Sen. John Griesheimer, R-Washington, would modify the law regarding the seizure of motor vehicles that has missing or illegible identification numbers. The bill would allow law enforcement officers the option as to whether they will or will not seize a motor vehicle that has an illegible identification number. Current law mandates officers to seize any vehicle with a missing number even if there is no criminal activity involved.
- Senate Bill 894, sponsored by Sen. Griesheimer, would amend the bumper height of vehicles with a gross vehicle rating over 9,001 pounds to a rating of 11,500 pounds to a maximum of 29 inches for the front bumper and 31 inches to the rear bumper.
- Senate Bill 899, sponsored by Sen. Griesheimer, would require school bus inspections to include an inspection of the frame.
- Senate Bill 900, sponsored by Sen. Griesheimer, would make certain vehicles exempt from the state’s emission inspection including: vehicles manufactured 26 years prior to the current model, motorcycles, school buses, diesel-powered vehicles and new and used vehicles manufactured within two years of the current calendar year.
- Senate Bill 956, sponsored by Sen. Delbert Scott, R-Lowry City, would allow people operating animal-driven vehicles to use lanterns and reflective material during nighttime hours instead of displaying the slow-moving triangle emblem.
- Senate Bill 845, sponsored by Sen. Anita Yeckel, R-St. Louis, would establish the Grand Army of the Republic Veterans’ Memorial Highway on a portion of Interstate 44 near the Franklin/Crawford county line.

No action was taken on the bills.

MISSOURI BUSINESS PREFERENCE BILL HEARD IN COMMITTEE: A bill that would require state agencies to give preference to Missouri companies was heard April 14 by the Senate Government, Accountability and Fiscal Oversight Committee. Senate Bill 1249 is sponsored by Sen. Norma Champion, R-Springfield.

Under the legislation, state agencies would be required to evaluate the use of products and services provided by Missouri companies compared to the use of products from out of state company. Agencies would have to provide a written explanation to support awarding a contract to a manufacturer or service provider from outside Missouri.

Testifying in favor of the bill were:

- Jim Kissler, Associated Industries of Missouri
- Mike Goessling, Flotron & McIntosh.

No action was taken on the bill.

HOUSE COMMITTEE APPROVES BILL TO CREATE SMALL BUSINESS REGULATORY FAIRNESS BOARD: The House Small Business Committee passed a bill

April 14 that would create the Small Business Regulatory Fairness Board and require state agencies proposing administrative rules to determine whether or not the proposed rules would affect small businesses. Agencies would be required to prepare a small business impact statement. Senate Bill 718 is sponsored by Sen. Anita Yeckel, R-St. Louis.

A similar proposal, House Bill 978, sponsored by Rep. Brian Baker, R-Belton, was approved April 13 by the Senate Financial and Governmental Organization, Veterans Affairs and Elections committee.

Brad Jones, representing the National Federation of Independent Businesses, testified in support of both bills.

The bills now go to their respective chambers for consideration.

SENATE COMMITTEE HEARS ACCIDENT REPORT BILL: The Senate Financial and Governmental Organization, Veterans Affairs and Election Committee heard a bill April 13 that would repeal the law that prohibits law enforcement officers from releasing accident reports to anyone who is not an interested party until 60 days after the accident. The bill also clarifies the procedures for processing accident reports, including written and computer-generated reports.

House Bill 1660 is sponsored by Rep. Brad Lager, R-Maryville.

No further action was taken on the bill.

SENATE COMMITTEE HEARS ADMINISTRATIVE RULE BILL: The Senate Financial and Governmental Organization, Veterans Affairs and Election Committee heard testimony April 13 on a bill that would revise the requirements for publishing administrative rules. House Bill 1616 is sponsored by Rep. Catherine Hanaway, R-Warson Woods.

The bill would authorize the Secretary of State to decide the format and the medium for publishing the Missouri Register, the Code of State Regulations and all rules, notices of proposed rule making and orders of rulemaking. The bill would allow the documents to be published electronically, however, publication in writing would be available upon request.

Chuck Pryor, representing the Secretary of State's Office, testified in favor of the bill. He said the bill could save his office \$150,000 a year. He said paper copies of the documents would be provided to people who don't have computer access.

There was no opposition to the bill.

No action was taken on the bill.

SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE PASSES MEMORIAL HIGHWAY BILLS: The Senate Transportation Committee passed a substitute bill that would create a number of memorial highways in Missouri. Senate Committee Substitute for House Bills 1029, 1438 and 1610 is sponsored by Sen. Jon Dolan, R-Lake St. Louis.

The bill would designate:

- A portion of State Highway J in Lincoln County the Veterans Highway
- A section of Highway 67 in St. Francois County the Deputy Steven R. Ziegler Memorial Highway
- A portion of Highway 67 in St. Francois County the Trooper Jesse R. Jenkins Memorial Highway
- A section of Interstate 70 in Saline, Cooper and Boone counties the U.S. Submarine Veterans' Memorial Highway. The 54-mile stretch of highway would represent the 54 marines lost during wartime and the Cold War.

The Senate Transportation Committee also approved another senate substitute bill that combines House Bill 826 and House Committee Substitute for House Bill 883.

The bill would designate:

- A section of Highway A in Wright County the Laura Ingalls Wilder Memorial Highway
- A section of Interstate 70 in Saline, Cooper and Boone counties the U.S. Submarine Veterans' Memorial Highway
- A portion of I-44 in Greene County as the Congressman Mel Hancock Freeway.

The bills now go to the full Senate for debate.

SENATE COMMITTEE PASSES SCHOOL BUS INSPECTION, ATV AND LOW

SPEED VEHICLE BILLS: The Senate Transportation Committee approved a bill April 14 that addresses ATVs and low speed vehicles and the inspection of school buses. Senate Committee Substitute for House Bills 996, 1142, 1201 and 1489 is sponsored by Sen. Jon Dolan, R-Lake St. Louis.

The bill would require the State Highway Patrol to include the frames of school buses as part of the annual school bus inspection.

The also would allow the operators of low-speed vehicles to use public highways that have a speed limit of 35 miles per hour or less. The law would apply to low speed vehicles whose top speed is between 20 and 25 miles per hour. Operators of low speed vehicles have to possess a driver's license.

Cities and counties could pass ordinances that are more stringent than the bill.

The bill now goes to the full Senate for consideration.

LICENSE PLATE BILLS APPROVED BY SENATE TRANSPORTATION

COMMITTEE: The Senate Transportation Committee approved a number of special license plate bills April 14. The bills include:

- House Bill 937, sponsored by Rep. Danielle Moore, R-Fulton, would create a special license plate for the Optimist International organization.

- House Bill 1114, sponsored by Rep. Trent Skaggs, D-North Kansas City, would create a special license plate for survivors of peace officers and firefighters killed in the line of duty.
- House Bill 1167, sponsored by Rep. Van Kelly, R-Norwood, would create a special license plate for members of the Missouri Foxtrotting Horse Breed Association.
- House Bill 1317, sponsored by Rep. Gayle Kingery, R-Poplar Bluff, would create a special license plate for the Boy Scouts of America.
- House Bill 1405, sponsored by Rep. Curt Dougherty, D-Independence, would create a license plate for the Missouri DeMolay.
- House Bill 1449, sponsored by Rep. Mark Bruns, R-Jefferson City, would create a special license plate for members of the Missouri Society of Professional Engineers.

The bills now go to the full Senate for consideration.

UPCOMING HEARINGS: The latest legislative hearing notices can be found at www.house.mo.gov; go to Hearings and choose either House Hearing Schedule or Senate Hearing Schedule.