

HB 1963 -- LAW LIBRARY FUND SURCHARGE

SPONSOR: DeGroot

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Judiciary by a vote of 7 to 1.

Currently, the circuit court in any circuit may collect a fee in civil cases not to exceed \$15, and that fee shall go toward maintenance and upkeep of the law library in the designated county. Jackson County and any circuit that reimburses the state for salaries of family court commissioners are allowed to charge a fee not to exceed \$20. The bill adds the Circuit Court in the city of St. Louis to the circuits that may charge a fee not to exceed \$20.

This bill is the same as HB 143 (2021).

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that this provides for an increase in the surcharge for the Law Library Fund. This truly is a situation where users of the court have to pay to use the library in the court. Court cost in the law library has not been increased in a long time. The library, in recent years, has engaged in efforts to expand the services of the library and have attempted to work with the public library as well as the SLU law library, but the subscription costs continue to escalate and so they need to increase the Fund. It is the oldest law library this side of the Mississippi. Because so many use the Internet now, the cost of paper books has skyrocketed.

Testifying for the bill were Representative DeGroot; Gail Wechsler, Law Library Association of St. Louis; and Robert Dierker, Law Library Association of St. Louis.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill submitted their testimony in writing, which can be found online.

Testifying against the bill was Arnie C. Ac Dienoff.

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.