

Rep. Henry Explains Controversial Vote

(KAIR)--State Representative Jerry Henry was no supporter of some aspects of the controversial House passed bill that's come to be perceived as discriminatory against homosexuals.

"It was controversial when we debated it in committee, very controversial on the floor. In fact, we did have a motion to send it back to committee because there were so many questions and so many unanswered issues about the bill. I voted in favor to send it back to committee, but that motion failed."

Ultimately, the Cummings Democrat did vote in favor of the bill, saying that it deserved time in the Senate for further scrutiny and debate. "I just felt it was an issue that we needed to keep talking about. That's probably the issue, why we have two houses as the first house kinda puts it together and the second house will put time to it."

Henry likely won't get his wish for further discussion, with Kansas Senate President Susan Wagle Thursday night issuing a statement that Senate support for the bill is unlikely, meaning the issue is, for all intents and purposes, dead on arrival. "I feel that some of the leadership in the House of Representatives maybe kind of baited a number of the Representatives to make these votes when this bill was not ready to be prepared to be debated," Henry tells KAIR Country News. "I say that because we end up with this debate and we send it over to the Senate and instead of the Senate President saying we're going to send this to committee and start working on it, she pretty much outright says it's a discriminatory bill and that we're not going to look at it anymore."

Henry believes, despite what he views as some troubling wording in the bill, the religious freedom of his constituents does need to be protected, and that's why he hoped the questionable portions would be resolved in the Senate.

The bill passed the House on Wednesday, 72-49, drawing strong reaction from across the country.

Many supporters said the bill was intended to address court decisions overturning bans on gay marriage in Utah and Oklahoma and possibly in Kansas one day.

Critics called the wording broad and vague, opening the door for discrimination, even from public employees.

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