

HB 1572 -- PATERNITY

SPONSOR: Franz

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass by consent" by the Special Committee on Family Services by a vote of 10 to 0.

This bill defines "unknown father," as it relates to adoption, guardianship, and termination of parental rights, as a person who:

- (1) Is not presumed to have a biological, adoptive, or legal relationship with a child under the Uniform Parentage Act which make a presumption of fatherhood due to marriage agreements made before or after the birth of a child;
- (2) Is not registered with the putative father registry as a father who has filed a notice of intent to claim paternity of a child; or
- (3) Has not filed a voluntary acknowledgment of paternity.

The bill also specifies that written consent is not required from an unknown father when terminating parental rights.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2009, FY 2010, and FY 2011.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the bill addresses the situation where the father is completely unknown and clarifies the term "unknown father" as it relates to adoption cases. It affects birth-mothers, innocent children, and prospective adoptive parents. The bill will protect the rights of children to stay in their happy adoptive home. The bill will expedite the adoption process in cases where the father is unknown and in placing the child with a loving adoptive family.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Franz; Stuart and Megan Taylor; and Missouri Coalition of Children Agencies.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.