

HB 1911 -- ALTERNATIVE TEACHER CERTIFICATION

SPONSOR: Muschany

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Special Committee on Student Achievement by a vote of 7 to 1.

This bill requires the State Board of Education to issue an initial four-year teaching certificate to individuals who complete certification with the American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence, except for special education certification. These teachers must have 60 contact hours in specified activities to apply and, to be eligible for a career continuous certificate, must complete 30 hours of professional development within four years, two years in an approved mentoring program, have a successful performance-based teacher evaluation, and participate in a beginning teacher assistance program.

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

PROPONENTS: Supporters say certification that does not require a person to undergo unnecessary training or a prolonged period with no income as a student teacher will help with teacher shortages. Seven states have approved American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence (ABCTE) certification, and this option could help rural districts fill teacher vacancies.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Muschany; David Saba, President, American Board for Certification of Teaching Excellence; and Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that it would be better to change the current alternative certification process than to adopt an off-the-shelf program. In six of the seven states where ABCTE has been approved, it was done by the state board of education, not by statute, and it did not result in a lifelong certificate.

Testifying against the bill were Missouri National Education Association; University of Central Missouri; and Missouri Association of School Librarians.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say the issue needs better data analysis on the current state options. It would be better to allow the State Board of Education to handle ABCTE as a vendor option. ABCTE can fill a need, rather than taking people away from current certification programs.

Testifying on the bill were Representative Lampe; and Missouri

State Teachers Association.