

HCS HB 2048 -- TEXTBOOK TRANSPARENCY ACT

SPONSOR: Kingery (Zimmerman)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass by consent" by the Committee on Higher Education by a vote of 8 to 0.

This substitute establishes the Textbook Transparency Act which requires textbook publishers to make the price, any substantial content revision between the last two editions, copyright dates, and the variety of formats for a text available, upon request, to faculty members or textbook adopters at public higher education institutions when the publisher provides information about their products. The substitute distinguishes between supplemental material and integrated textbooks and requires a publisher to make a textbook and supplemental material available separately when selling the materials bundled together. Where it is feasible, public institutions of higher education must develop policies allowing students to use financial aid that has not been disbursed for tuition or fees to purchase textbooks at campus bookstores.

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

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that textbook prices have increased steadily, revisions are issued more frequently, and materials that sometimes go unused get bundled with required books. Several states have moved to a fair market approach.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Zimmerman; Associated Students of the University of Missouri; Missouri Family Network; and Chris Miller, Student Government of Truman State University.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say the bundling issue has some aspects that need to be worked out. The bill might help with book buy-backs and could help guide the faculty's buying decisions.

Testifying on the bill were Reed Elsevier; Association of American Publishers; and University of Central Missouri.