

HCS HB 236 -- STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

SPONSOR: Wallace (Lipke)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass by consent" by the Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education by a vote of 14 to 0.

This substitute establishes Kaitlyn's Law, which requires each school district with a high school to develop policies and procedures that allow students with disabilities who have completed four years of high school to participate in their graduation ceremony and other related activities under certain circumstances. The policies and procedures must be given to students with disabilities and their parents or guardians in a timely and meaningful notice.

The substitute contains an emergency clause.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2010, FY 2011, and FY 2012.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that some school districts will not let an otherwise qualified student with an individualized education plan (IEP) participate in graduation ceremonies if the student requires further services after his or her senior year of high school. Students with IEPs who require additional services may receive services up to age 21. Some parents are forced to choose between letting their child participate in graduation at the loss of transition services or accept that their child cannot participate in order to ensure access to further services.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Lipke; Traci Ritter; Kaitlyn Thompson; Missouri School Boards' Association; Diane Golden, Missouri Council of Administrators of Special Education; Citizens for Missouri's Children; and Nancy S. Robertson.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.