

HB 1157 -- Missouri Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Sponsor: Lampe

This bill increases the membership of the Missouri Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, within the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, from nine to 19 members by adding two members each from the Senate and the House of Representatives; the directors of the departments of Mental Health, Social Services, and Health and Senior Services or their designees; the commissioners of the departments of Elementary and Secondary Education and Higher Education or their designees; and a person representing the Centers for Independent Living. The terms of members, except ex officio or General Assembly members, are lengthened from three to four years. The commission's duties will include advising the Governor, General Assembly, and state agencies on all state services for the deaf and hard of hearing.

The commission will also be required to make recommendations for developing a statewide plan for an integrated system of training, treatment, and services for the deaf and hard of hearing of all ages with preliminary findings due to the General Assembly by July 1, 2011. The preparation for the state plan must include a study and report on the means for delivering services that are created, well-utilized, and well-distributed; a plan for evaluating regional service areas; recommendations for including higher education in developing certification or degree programs for students specializing in deaf or hard of hearing services; recommendations of individuals for a committee of stakeholders that will develop best practices and treatment standards for mental health treatment for the deaf and hard of hearing; and examination of barriers to the reporting of accurate information of demographic data.