

HCS HB 350 -- FIREARM OWNERSHIP INFORMATION

SPONSOR: Frederick

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Committee on General Laws by a vote of 9 to 3.

This substitute prohibits the records of ownership of a firearm or applications for ownership, licensing, certification, permitting, or an endorsement that allows a person to own, acquire, possess, or carry a firearm from being subject to the Open Meetings and Records Law, commonly called the Sunshine Law. The records must not be open for inspection or its contents disclosed, except by court order to persons having a legitimate interest in its contents. Any person or entity violating these provisions is guilty of a class A misdemeanor.

The substitute specifies that no licensed health care professional can be required by law to inquire as to whether a patient owns a firearm, document or maintain in a patient's medical records whether the patient owns a firearm, or notify any governmental entity of the identity of a patient based solely on his or her status as an owner of a firearm. The substitute does not prohibit or restrict a health care professional from inquiring, documenting, or disclosing the information if it is necessitated or medically indicated by the health care professional's scope of practice and would not be in violation of any state or federal law.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that some health care professionals are asking irrelevant questions, such as a patient's status as a gun owner, that are not medically necessary. The bill addresses this increasing concern. However, the bill allows a health care professional to use his or her own judgment in determining when an inquiry is relevant and necessary to provide sufficient medical care.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Frederick; and Missourians for Personal Safety.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.