

HCS HB 233 -- ORAL CONTRACEPTIVES

SPONSOR: Dogan

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Health and Mental Health Policy by a vote of 9 to 1.

PRACTICE OF PHARMACY

This bill adds the prescribing and dispensing of hormonal contraceptive patches and self-administered oral hormonal contraceptives to the definition of the practice of pharmacy (Section 338.010, RSMo).

HORMONAL CONTRACEPTIVE

The bill permits a pharmacist to prescribe self-administered oral hormonal contraceptives to a person who is 18 years of age or older regardless of whether the person has evidence of a previous prescription and to a person under 18 years of age if the person has evidence of a previous prescription. All state and federal laws governing insurance coverage of contraceptives shall apply to self-administered oral hormonal contraceptives prescribed under the provisions of the bill (Section 338.660).

CONTRACEPTIVE REIMBURSEMENT

The bill requires each health carrier or benefit plan that offers or issues health benefit plans in Missouri and provides coverage for contraceptives to reimburse a health care provider or dispensing entity for dispensing a three-month supply of a prescription contraceptive for the first dispensing to an insured and 3-month supply for a refill of the same contraceptive regardless of whether the insured was enrolled in the health benefit plan or policy at the time of the first dispensing. The coverage required under these provisions must not be subject to any greater deductible or co-payment than similar health services provided by the health benefit plan (Section 376.1240).

This bill is similar to HB 1679 (2016).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that this is a pro-life bill that provides women with greater access to oral contraceptives. Allowing pharmacists to dispense birth control pills will remove barriers to timely access to contraceptives and prevent women from going without birth control due to logistical factors. This bill does not expand health insurance coverage, it simply allows women who already have coverage to receive more pills at a time, thereby decreasing the likelihood of a gap in use. Studies show that many

low income women at risk for unplanned pregnancy would be more likely to use birth control pills if they were not required to have a prescription. Oral contraceptives are a very effective form of birth control. Less unplanned pregnancies would benefit not just individual women but the community as a whole.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Dogan; Missouri Pharmacy Association; Meg Boyko, Teen Pregnancy & Prevention Partnership; and the Missouri Family Health Council.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that they admire wanting to stop unwanted pregnancies, however it is important for women to get a wellness exam and they can get one free every year. Patients need to go to their doctors to get seen and do preventative care.

Testifying against the bill was Blue Cross Blue Shield Of Kansas City and the Missouri Insurance Coalition.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say that it is important that women go to see their doctor and get a regular pap test.

Testifying on the bill were Missouri State Medical Association; American Congress of Obstetricians And Gynecologist; William E. Shoehigh, United Healthcare Services, Inc.; and Planned Parenthood Advocates.