

HB 1630 -- MARRIAGE LICENSES

SPONSOR: Evans

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Children and Families by a vote of 10 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Rules- Legislative Oversight Committee by a vote of 12 to 0.

Currently, a county recorder must issue a license authorizing the marriage of any person under 15 years of age so long as certain requirements are met. This bill increases the age to 17 years and requires the court to hold a hearing, requiring the parties seeking a marriage license to present evidence that the marriage is advisable. A marriage license shall not be issued to any person 21 years of age or older if the other party to the marriage is less than 17 years of age or if either party is under 15 years of age. Applicants are required to provide proof of age documentation.

This bill is similar to HB 270 (2017).

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that this bill brings our marriage law in alignment with our statutory rape law in that the statutory rape law says that a person over 21 cannot have sex with a person under 17. Additionally, this bill will help prevent sexual abuse and trafficking of minors because it requires a judge to look at a marriage application if either party is under 17.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Evans; Kids Win Missouri; Missouri Coalition of Children's Agencies; Missouri Kids First; Dr. Valerie French; Planned Parenthood Advocates in Missouri; and the Missouri Coalition Against Domestic Sexual Violence.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.