

HCS HB 1658 -- HEALTHCARE FOR DISABLED CHILDREN

SPONSOR: Basye

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Insurance Policy by a vote of 11 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Legislative Oversight by a vote of 12 to 0.

This bill prohibits any third-party payer for health care services from limiting coverage or denying reimbursement for treatment for physical, cognitive, emotional, mental, or developmental disabilities in specified situations.

The bill also designates the Children's Special Health Care Needs Service as the appropriate agency to administer services to children with physical or developmental disabilities.

This bill is similar to HB 1011 (2017).

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that this bill will help provide additional services for many children with developmental disabilities. Currently, our children don't have enough access to therapeutically necessary services. Getting therapy early is important to these children and having access to the right kinds of therapy is so important to help them for the future. Schools provide some therapy but it is mostly educational.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Basye; Molly Myers; Jacquelyn Sample; Angela Craven, Gateway Association for Behavior Analysis; Sungwoo Kahug, Missouri Association for Behavior Analysis; Patricia Meyer-Alster; Melanie Stinnett; Robyn Schelp; Kathleen Basi; Beth Fizer; Nicolet Yoder; Chastidy Bailey; and Erin Suelmann, Down Syndrome Association of Greater St Louis.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say that this bill creates more mandates on insurance companies causing increased costs for consumers purchasing insurance products. We agree that the kids need these services and how important they are but maybe this should be done through the appropriation process.

Testifying against the bill were Missouri Insurance Coalition; Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas City; America's Health Insurance Plans; and Anthem.