

HB 1970 -- DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

SPONSOR: Fitzwater

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Judiciary by a vote of 9 to 0.

This bill provides that after a person accused of committing an offense has been committed to the Department of Mental Health due to lack of mental fitness to stand trial, the legal counsel for the department shall have standing to participate in hearings regarding involuntary medications for the accused.

This bill is the same as HB 945 (2017).

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the department does not currently have standing to challenge orders for involuntary medication, so this bill is important because it gives the department the opportunity to be part of the conversation. The department would be part of the conversation only once a person has been committed to the department.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Fitzwater and Rick Gowdy, Missouri Department of Mental Health.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.