

HCS HB 439 -- TEACHING PERMITS

SPONSOR: Davidson

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Emerging Issues by a vote of 8 to 5. Vote "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Administrative Oversight by a vote of 8 to 4.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 439.

The bill adds district teaching permits, described below, to a manner in which a teacher may receive a certificate of license from the State Board of Education (SBE).

This bill will allow school districts to issue a district teaching permit to any individual who does not currently hold a SBE issued teaching certificate. The district teaching permit allows the holder to teach only in the issuing school district unless another school district also issues permits and recognizes permits issued in this manner as part of their policy.

The bill requires districts to develop a policy listing the qualifications an individual shall meet to be eligible for the teaching permit, which include, at a minimum, an associates degree and background check. The number of teachers issued a teaching permit must not exceed 25% of the total number of teachers employed in the district. If an individual is issued a teaching permit and teaches for four years, the SBE may issue a teaching certificate as specified in the bill alternatively to receiving a certificate due to the permit alone.

Any individual who obtains a teaching permit as described within the bill shall be deemed a teacher for purposes of determining minimum salary, tenure, and retirement.

The following is a summary of the public testimony from the committee hearing. The testimony was based on the introduced version of the bill.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that this bill helps immediately address teacher shortages by allowing individuals who may have knowledge and experience in an area to teach. The bill allows local school districts to determine how best to manage their teachers. This system benefits smaller school districts who may have higher turnover rate and who cannot readily fill positions.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Davidson; and Matt

Teeter, Willard Public Schools.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that it lowers the standards for educators and therefore hurts students. Opponents do not think the solution to fewer teachers is to change the standards required to teach, but the state should address other issues. This bill could also further distance districts who may have varying standards for teachers under the bill. Teacher certification encompasses more than just knowledge and ability to teach, but an understanding of the student personally, life circumstances, and other factors that may affect education.

Testifying against the bill were Dr. Jennice McCafferty-Wright; Elizabeth King; Jim Kreider, Missouri Retired Teachers Association; Missouri State University; Arnie C. Dienoff; Missouri State Teachers Association; Public School Retirement System; Public Education Employee Retirement System ; and the Missouri National Education Association.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.