

HCS HB 1566 -- MEDICAL ASSISTANCE BENEFITS

SPONSOR: Wright (Stefanick)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Special Committee on General Laws by a vote of 6 to 3.

This substitute states that persons made eligible for medical assistance benefits pursuant to the federal Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999, needy persons who comply with Title XIX, Public Law 89-97, 1965 amendments to the federal Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. Section 301 et seq.), and any person who is eligible for any other optional medical benefits provided by the Department of Social Services will only be eligible for these benefits if annual appropriations are made. The substitute will not apply to classes of individuals listed in 42 U.S.C. Section 1396a(a)(10)(A)(i). The substitute also makes technical corrections to references that have become obsolete.

FISCAL NOTE: Estimated Income on General Revenue Fund of \$0 to \$758,565,165 in FY 2005, \$0 to \$792,674,676 in FY 2006, and \$0 to \$828,348,484 in FY 2007. No impact on Other State Funds in FY 2005, FY 2006, and FY 2007.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the court's response to lowered appropriations for what were considered optional vision and dental programs created the need for explicit statutory reference to the legislature's authority to fund optional benefits subject to appropriation.

Testifying for the bill was Representative Stefanick.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say that it would reinstate disincentives for employing people with disabilities. It also places services for vulnerable populations at the risk of a line-item veto.

Testifying against the bill was Paragard, Incorporated.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say the Department of Social Services would expect the court to react in the same way it did last year if appropriations for optional benefits are lowered without explicit statutory authority.

Others testifying on the bill was Department of Social Services.

Becky DeNeve, Senior Legislative Analyst