

HCS HB 1327 -- WILLING PROVIDERS OF HEALTH CARE

SPONSOR: Schaaf

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Special Committee on Healthcare Facilities by a vote of 6 to 4.

This substitute prohibits health insurers, the Missouri Medicaid Program, and the federal Medicare Program from discriminating against any provider located within the geographic coverage area of a health benefit plan who is willing to meet the terms and conditions for participation in the plan.

FISCAL NOTE: Estimated Cost on General Revenue Fund could exceed \$8,991,335 in FY 2007, could exceed \$10,789,603 in FY 2008, and could exceed \$10,789,603 in FY 2009. Estimated cost on Other State Funds could exceed \$1,618,722 in FY 2007, could exceed \$1,942,466 in FY 2008, and could exceed \$1,942,466 in FY 2009.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say the bill is a stepping stone to preserving the patient-physician relationship. Patients need to be taken care of by their physician of choice and not have to shop for a different physician every other year. If a physician is willing to agree to the terms of the pay grid by the insurance company, the patient should be able to continue to see the physician of his or her choice.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Schaaf; Missouri Association of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons; Missouri State Chiropractors Association; Dr. Jerry Catapang; Dr. Thomas Greene; Dr. Marsha Taylor; Missouri State Medical Association; Missouri Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons; Missouri Pharmacy Association; and Missouri Academy of Family Physicians.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say that the cost of implementation will cause premiums to increase and will bring an end to provider plans. Missouri already has a structural process in place to protect health care providers when House Bill 335 was enacted in 1997.

Testifying against the bill were Blue Cross Blue Shield of Missouri; Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry; United HealthCare; Missouri Insurance Coalition; America's Health Insurance Plans; Aetna, Incorporated; Cigna Healthcare; and Missouri's Health Insurance Plans.

Dominic Lackey, Legislative Analyst