

HCS HB 1742 -- MEDICAL ASSISTANCE FOR EMPLOYED PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

SPONSOR: Bruns (Portwood)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Senior Citizen Advocacy by a vote of 11 to 0.

This substitute requires the Department of Social Services to determine the eligibility of an employed disabled person requesting medical assistance whose family gross income is less than 250% of the federal poverty level. The substitute:

- (1) Requires that an individual meet the definition of a disabled person under the federal Supplemental Security Income Program or of an employed individual with a medically improved disability under the federal Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999;
- (2) Requires an individual who has a net income that does not exceed the limit for permanent and totally disabled individuals to receive non-spenddown Missouri Medicaid benefits;
- (3) Requires any participant whose gross income exceeds 100% of the federal poverty level to pay a premium for participation in this program;
- (4) Requires an individual to participate in an employer-sponsored health insurance plan if the department determines that it is more cost effective;
- (5) Exempts any income earned through certified extended employment at a sheltered workshop for the purposes of determining eligibility; and
- (6) Exempts medical savings accounts and independent living accounts limited to deposits of earned income with a value not exceeding \$2,500 from the asset limits for eligibility.

The provisions of the substitute will expire three years from the effective date.

The substitute contains an emergency clause.

FISCAL NOTE: Estimated Cost on General Revenue Fund of \$7,613,255 in FY 2007, \$7,943,961 in FY 2008, and \$8,300,054 in FY 2009. Subject to appropriations. No impact on Other State Funds in FY 2007, FY 2008, and FY 2009.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the bill will give the disabled the opportunity to work without the fear of losing their health care coverage and will enhance the dignity of disabled individuals' lives by increasing their level of self-sufficiency,

decreasing their dependency on unearned income and social services, and allowing them to become contributors to state funds through shared premiums. The bill will also encourage disabled individuals to work more hours in order to offset higher levels of unearned income.

Testifying for the bill were Representatives Portwood and Spreng; Department of Social Services; Lafayette Industries; Paraquad, Incorporated; Missouri Organization of Centers for Independent Living; Epilepsy Education Organization - Epilepsy Foundation of the St. Louis Region; Gateway Area Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society; Missouri Association of Sheltered Workshop Managers; Missouri Association for Community Action, Incorporated; and Missouri Association of Rehabilitation Facilities.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

Alex Curchin, Legislative Analyst