

HCS HB 1857 -- WILLING PROVIDERS OF HEALTHCARE

SPONSOR: Schaaf

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Special Committee on Healthcare Transformation by a vote of 7 to 1.

This substitute prohibits health insurers, the MO HealthNet Program, and the federal Medicare Program from discriminating against any Missouri health care provider, licensed pharmacy, or licensed home health care agency 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 of Unknown - could exceed \$1,207,701 in FY 2009, Unknown - could exceed \$1,449,241 in FY 2010, and Unknown - could exceed \$1,449,241 in FY 2011. Estimated Cost on Other State Funds of Unknown - could exceed \$231,838 in FY 2009, Unknown - could exceed \$449,410 in FY 2010, and Unknown - could exceed \$449,410 in FY 2011.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the bill provides choice in healthcare to everyone, reduces healthcare costs, protects continuity of care, and promotes competition among providers. Without the bill, patients could have additional costs when seeing out-of-network providers.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Schaaf; Jay Bryant-Wimp; St. John's Regional Medical Center; John Collins, DO; Mary Fleming; Trudy Stringer; Marsha Taylor, MD; Missouri Retailers Association; Missouri State Chiropractors Association; and Vicki Wilbers.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that it raises healthcare costs, forces a carrier to take any physician willing to meet the contract terms even if the provider has previously been rejected by the carrier, and does not require willing provider status for hospitals. There is already choice in the healthcare marketplace.

Testifying against the bill were Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield of Missouri; Missouri Hospital Association; Express Scripts; MEDCO Health Solutions; Coventry Health Care of Kansas, Incorporated; America's Health Insurance Plans; Missouri Insurance Coalition; Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry; and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas City.