

HB 69 -- SPECIAL NEEDS CHILD ADOPTION TAX CREDIT

SPONSOR: Storch

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass by consent" by the Committee on Ways and Means by a vote of 12 to 0.

This bill defines "adoption resource center" as a state-funded agency providing pre- and post-adoption services to families for preventing adoption disruption and recruiting adoptive parents. The bill specifies that qualified centers will get an equal portion of the unclaimed funds set aside for tax credits for non-recurring adoption expenses that is currently divided equally among court-appointed special advocates (CASA), child advocacy centers, and crisis care centers.

The bill also removes obsolete provisions regarding the adoption tax credit for special needs children.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2010, FY 2011, and FY 2012.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the bill allows adoption resource centers to receive funds through the existing adoption tax credit from a portion of the unclaimed funds. Currently, about \$600,000 is left each year. Adoption resource centers help keep children out of foster care and get them adopted. Currently, there are 2,000 children waiting to be adopted in Missouri. A resource center provides intervention services to approximately 1,200 families every year including specialized training, parent and youth support groups, educational supports, respite, and advocacy.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Storch; and Melanie Scheetz, Foster and Adoptive Care Coalition.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.