

HCS HB 496, 615 & 623 -- METHAMPHETAMINE PRECURSOR DRUGS

SPONSOR: Lipke

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Crime Prevention by a vote of 10 to 2.

This substitute changes the controlled substance classification of all methamphetamine precursor drugs from Schedule IV and Schedule V to Schedule III. The classification change will require a physician's prescription to obtain any of these drugs.

The substitute also repeals provisions regarding the logging and recording of the sales as well as the storing of these drugs behind the counter from public access.

FISCAL NOTE: Estimated Cost on General Revenue Fund of More Than \$100,000 in FY 2010, FY 2011, and FY 2012. Estimated Cost on Other State Funds of Less Than \$200,000 in FY 2010, FY 2011, and FY 2012.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the bills deal with curbing methamphetamine production in the state. A number of measures have been passed in recent years, yet Missouri currently has more than double the number of methamphetamine lab incidents than any other state. Pseudoephedrine is the only ingredient required to make methamphetamine that cannot be substituted. Therefore, it is important to control the sale of that drug. These bills will require individuals to have a prescription for any medication that contains pseudoephedrine or ephedrine. However, a physician will be able to prescribe up to five refills of a 90-day supply to ensure that a patient will not have to visit the physician every time he or she needs the medication.

Testifying for the bills were Representative Lipke; Jason Grellner, Missouri Narcotics Officers Association; John Jordan, Sheriff of Cape Girardeau County; Missouri Sheriffs Association; Missouri Police Chiefs' Association; and Missouri State Fraternal Order of Police.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bills say that requiring a prescription for medications containing pseudoephedrine and ephedrine will increase consumer costs and make it more difficult to obtain the needed medications. Oregon is the only state that has passed a similar measure, and the number of meth labs in that state has not decreased. The real-time electronic logbook monitoring legislation that was passed last year has not had a chance to prove its effectiveness in this state but has been a successful solution in other states.

Testifying against the bills were Missouri Retailers Association; Missouri Hospital Association; Missouri Pharmacy Association; and Consumer Healthcare Products Association.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bills say that meth labs are very time consuming and dangerous to disassemble. Many man hours are taken away from investigating other drug cases, and several law enforcement officers have had health problems from breathing the residue associated with meth labs.

Testifying on the bills were State Highway Patrol; and Michael Boeger, United States Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs.