

HCS HB 1054 -- FOSTER CARE AND ADOPTION

SPONSOR: Barnes

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass by Consent" by the Committee on Children, Families, and Persons with Disabilities by a vote of 12 to 0.

This bill adds a foster parent to those state employees who are allowed to use accrued sick leave, annual leave, or the same leave without pay granted to biological parents to take time off for purposes of arranging for a foster child's placement or caring for a foster child after placement.

The state, its departments, or agencies, must provide for a leave sharing program to permit its employees to donate annual leave, overtime, or compensatory time to an employee who is arranging for a foster or adopted child's placement or caring for the child after placement which has caused or is likely to cause the employee to take leave without pay or to terminate employment. Any donated annual leave, overtime, or compensatory time must be transferable between employees in different departments, agencies, or political subdivisions of the state with the agreement of the chief administrative officers of the entities.

Any donated annual leave, overtime, or compensatory time authorized under the bill must only be used by the recipient employee for purposes of arranging for the foster or adopted child's placement or caring for the child after placement. The recipient employee must use all forms of paid leave available for use by him or her prior to using donated annual leave, overtime, or compensatory time.

Donated annual leave, overtime, or compensatory time must be given voluntarily, and no employee can be coerced, threatened, intimidated, or financially induced into donating annual leave, overtime, or compensatory time for the purposes of the leave sharing program.

"Foster or adoptive parent" refers to an individual pursuing to foster or adopt a child and a person who has a foster or adopted child placed in the home.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that currently, we have a system of shared leave which encourages adoptions; this bill extends that to foster care placements. It allows shared leave for state employees who take in a foster child.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Barnes; Campaign Life

Missouri; and Missouri Coalition of Children's Agencies.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say there are intricate policies to deal with abuse of leave and intricate federal laws to deal with FMLA issues.

Testifying on the bill was Office of Administration.