

HCS HB 1192 -- CONSENT FOR ABORTION FOR MINORS

SPONSOR: Miller

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Committee on Health Care Policy by a vote of 9 to 3.

Currently, no person is permitted to knowingly perform an abortion on a minor unless the attending physician has secured the informed written consent of the minor and one parent or guardian of the minor. This bill requires the consenting parent or guardian of the minor to notify any other custodial parent or guardian in writing at least five days prior to the abortion being performed.

A custodial parent does not include a parent who has been convicted of sexual abuse or a sexual offense against a minor, physical assault of a minor, a person against whom an order of protection has been entered, or a parent whose custodial or parental rights have been terminated by a court of competent jurisdiction.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the bill will help to protect minors who may be pushed to have an abortion by a parent or guardian. Parents have a right to know what is going on in their children's lives and need to be aware because of the behavioral, psychological, and other problems that can occur after an abortion. The bill is supported by public opinion and protects minors and parents whose family is no longer intact.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Miller; Nancy Steward; Missouri Family Network; Missouri Baptist Convention; Christian Life Commission; Missouri Right to Life; Campaign Life Missouri; Missouri Family Policy Council; and Joanne Schrader.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that the bill doesn't meet the reality of every family and could lead to serious consequences for the minor by involving both parents. The unintended consequences for a minor could cause a delay in necessary care or even a complete lack of care. The goal of family communication is admirable but forcing such communication is detrimental to the health of the minor.

Testifying against the bill were Dr. Colleen McNicholas; Jeffrey Mittmen, ACLU of Missouri; Felicia Scott; Rev. Rebecca Turner; NARAL Pro-Choice Missouri; and Planned Parenthood Advocates in Missouri.