

HB 58 -- PERINATAL CARE

SPONSOR: Haefner

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Health and Mental Health Policy by a vote of 11 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Committee on Rules- Administrative Oversight by a vote of 14 to 0.

The bill requires the Department of Health and Senior Services to seek broad public and stakeholder input during multiple hearings in diverse geographic regions of the state and then establish criteria for levels of maternal care designations and levels of neonatal care designations for birthing facilities based on specified criteria.

Nothing in these provisions must be construed in any way to modify or expand the licensure of any health care professional or to require a patient be transferred to a different facility.

Beginning January 1, 2019, any hospital with a birthing facility must report to the department its appropriate level of maternal care designation and neonatal care designation as determined by the criteria specified under these provisions.

The bill permits the department to partner with appropriate nationally recognized professional organizations with demonstrated expertise in maternal and neonatal standards of care to administer these provisions.

The criteria for levels of maternal and neonatal care developed under the provisions of the bill must not include pregnancy termination or counseling or referral for pregnancy termination.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the focus of the bill is maternal safety thus the bill establishes a maternity level of care, similar in theory to trauma levels of care, neonatal levels of care, or stroke levels of care. The bill encourages the formation of partnerships early and keeping the relationships active to ensure moms and babies get the very best care. This type of legislation has been shown to drop infant mortality rates for over 40 years and leads to improved health outcomes.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Haefner; SSM Health Care; St. Louis Children's Hospital; Jessica Henman; American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists - Missouri Section; Judy Wilson Griffin, Association of Women's Health and Neonatal Nursing; March of Dimes; and the Missouri Chapter of The American Academy of Pediatrics.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.