

HCS HB 270 -- MARRIAGE LICENSES

SPONSOR: Evans

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Children and Families by a vote of 11 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Committee on Rules- Legislative Oversight by a vote of 11-0.

Currently, a county recorder must issue a license authorizing the marriage of any person under 15 years of age so long as certain requirements are met. This bill increases the age to 17 years and requires the applicant to provide proof of age documentation.

The bill also removes provisions that allow the court having jurisdiction to approve marriages between persons who lack capacity to enter into a marriage.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that due to the fact that children can be married at the age of 15 in this state, Missouri has become a haven for individuals engaged in human trafficking. This bill would strengthen the state's weak child marriage laws and would project that Missouri has strong anti-rape and anti-child abuse values.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Evans; Johnson County Recorder of Deeds; Missouri Kids First; Missouri Children's Leadership Council; Missouri Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence; NCJW St. Louis; Missouri Attorney General's Office; and Britney Pfreger.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.