

HCS HB 1862 -- ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTS

SPONSOR: Christofanelli

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Special Committee to Improve the Care and Well-Being of Young People by a vote of 11 to 0.

This bill provides that the Children's Division, within the Department of Social Services, may accept a report for investigation or assessment if either the child or alleged perpetrator resides or may be found in Missouri or if the incident occurred in Missouri or if the child recently resided in Missouri but the incident occurred outside of Missouri. The division must immediately communicate reports that merit investigation to the appropriate agencies in the state where the child is believed to be located.

This bill shall not prohibit the division from co-investigating a report of child abuse or neglect or sharing records and information with another state, territory, or nation if the division determines it is appropriate to do so. The division may share records with child welfare agencies and law enforcement agencies outside of Missouri when the division believes that such information is needed to protect a child. Unsubstantiated reports may only be shared if the division reasonably believes the receiving entity will prevent unauthorized dissemination (Chapter 210, RSMo).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that this bill will allow the free flow of information between states to protect children from abuse.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Christofanelli; Great Circle; Missouri Coalition of Children's Agencies; Kids Win Missouri; Fosteradopt Connect; Office of Child Advocate; Missouri Kids First; and Tim Decker, Department of Social Services, Children's Division.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.