

HCS HB 1868 -- HEARING AID DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM

SPONSOR: Kelley (127)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Children and Families by a vote of 8 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Rules- Legislative Oversight Committee by a vote of 10 to 0.

This bill requires the Missouri Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing to establish a hearing aid distribution program to provide financial assistance to allow those who are deaf or hard of hearing and whose income is at or below the federal poverty level to obtain hearing aids. The commission may promulgate rules necessary to implement the program and may enter into contracts as necessary to carry out the program.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that this bill will help those who are deaf or hard of hearing to communicate with others and would allow them to be removed from other governmental programs because they can more easily find work.

Testifying for the bill was Representative Kelley.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say that MO HealthNet does not cover hearing aids, but there are some other programs that do provide assistance to afford hearing aids.

Testifying on the bill were David Baker, Missouri Assistive Technology and Opeoluwa Sotonwa, Missouri Commission for Deaf & Hard of Hearing.