

HB 112 -- PROVISIONS FOR GIFTED EDUCATION

SPONSOR: Sommer

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Special Committee on Student Accountability by a vote of 8 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Administrative Oversight by a vote of 5 to 2.

This bill requires school districts to establish a state-approved gifted program if 3% or more of the students are determined to be gifted. Districts with average daily attendance of 350 or fewer students are not required to have a teacher certificated to teach gifted education, but any teacher providing gifted instruction without a gifted-teaching certificate must participate in six hours per year of professional development regarding gifted services.

This bill is similar to HCS HB 1435 (2018) and HB 1030 (2017).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that gifted children deserve specific appropriate programs and that those programs need to be supported. Prior legislation made modifications to gifted funding and since that time districts have cut gifted programs across the state. Supporters stated that it was a moral imperative to ensure that all students receive an appropriate education and this bill would further that goal.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Sommer; Dr. Beth Winton; Dr. Steve Coxon; Dr. Robin Lady, NBCT; Missouri National Education Association; and Missouri Education Reform Council.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that mandates like the one in this bill cost money, and although the funding for gifted programs are included in the funding formula, the money may be reallocated to other areas based on local district needs.

Testifying against the bill was School Administrators Coalition.