

HCS HB 725 -- TOBACCO CESSATION

SPONSOR: Rone

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Health and Mental Health Policy by a vote of 13 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Legislative Oversight by a vote of 8 to 0.

This bill allows a pharmacist to prescribe and dispense nicotine replacement therapy products that are approved for the sole purpose of aiding in tobacco or smoking cessation. The Board of Pharmacy and Board of Healing Arts shall jointly adopt regulations governing a pharmacist's authority to prescribe and dispense nicotine replacement therapy products. Third party payment for nicotine replacement therapy products is not required.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that this bill makes pharmacies an access point for people who want to stop smoking. This bill will help prevent tobacco-related illness and save money spent on tobacco-related illness.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Rone; Wayne Lee; Missouri Pharmacy Association; Missouri Retailers Association; and Joel Kurzman, National Association of Chain Drug Stores.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say that some tobacco cessation drugs, particularly oral cessation drugs, can have severe side effects, particularly for people with underlying mental illness, so it would be better to have a doctor involved.

Testifying against the bill were Missouri State Medical Association; Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas City; and Missouri Insurance Coalition.