

HB 877 -- CHILD FATALITY REVIEW PANELS

SPONSOR: Kelly (141)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Children and Families by a vote of 12 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Administrative Oversight by a vote of 7 to 1.

This bill modifies the law regarding the confidentiality of records made and maintained by entities under the child fatality review panel statutes. Currently, all meetings, reports, and records are required to be confidential and not open to the public. This bill specifies that all meetings and work product shall be confidential, while the state technical assistance team shall make non-identifiable aggregate data on child fatalities public and the Director of the Department of Social Services shall have the discretion to release identifiable data. The state technical assistance team shall make an annual report on child fatalities that includes a summary on the county level of compliance with the child fatality review panel statutes.

This bill removes the requirement that the Department of Health and Senior Services analyze the child fatality review panel reports and prepare epidemiological reports regarding childhood deaths.

This bill is similar to SB 305 (2019).

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that this change is vital to allowing the panels to track patterns and target areas of the state with higher fatality rates due to preventable causes. Currently, a lot of the data is released in a huge report, but statute prevents releasing it in a way that allows for better communication to stakeholders and action steps to improve the situation.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Kelly; Children's Trust Fund; Office of Child Advocate; Missouri Coalition Of Children's Agencies; and Tammy Walden.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.