

HB 907 -- PARAMEDIC PRACTITIONERS

SPONSOR: Roden

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Health and Mental Health Policy by a vote of 12 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Legislative Oversight by a vote of 9 to 0.

This bill allows licensure of paramedic practitioners. An applicant for a paramedic practitioner license must be an emergency medical technician-paramedic. A paramedic practitioner must practice under a supervision agreement with a supervising physician.

A paramedic practitioner's scope of practice can only consist of: taking patient histories; performing physical examinations; performing or assisting routine laboratory and patient screening procedures; performing routine therapeutic procedures; recording diagnostic impressions; counseling patients regarding mental and physical health using procedures approved by a licensed physician; assisting a supervising physician in institutional settings; assisting in surgery; and performing other tasks the paramedic practitioner has been trained in and is proficient to perform. A paramedic practitioner cannot perform abortions.

A paramedic practitioner can prescribe some drugs, including some controlled substances listed in Schedule II, III, IV, or V, pursuant to a physician supervision agreement, as outlined in the bill.

The supervising physician will be responsible for health care services rendered by the paramedic practitioner. The supervising physician must document the completion of a one-month period of continuously present practice before the paramedic practitioner can practice without the physician being continuously present.

The Board of Registration of Healing Arts, within the Department of Insurance, Financial Institutions and Professional Registration, can issue a temporary license to a paramedic practitioner before the results of the paramedic practitioner exam is announced.

The bill allows a certifying agency to register with the board to certify or register individuals who have completed academic and training requirements to be a paramedic practitioner.

The bill establishes an Advisory Commission for Paramedic Practitioners, which shall guide, advise, and make recommendations, to the board regarding paramedic practitioner licensure.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that this bill will help alleviate the over-burden on emergency rooms, by getting patients treatment before they would have to go to the hospital. There is a need for all kinds of mid-level practitioners. This bill will allow current paramedics a route to get a higher degree and move up in their careers.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Roden; Missouri Hospital Association; and Wayne Lee.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that there are educational concerns with the licensure and that the education requirement needs to be more thoroughly defined.

Testifying against the bill was Mark Schebbing, MD.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say that there are still issues to figure out and questions about reimbursement, educational certification, and how the collaborative practice arrangement will work. Any new category of licensure should be handled with extra care.

Testifying on the bill were Missouri Nurses Association; Missouri State Medical Association; Jason White, Mid-America Regional Council; Missouri Nurse Practitioners Association; and Missouri Association of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons.