

HB 1486 -- HYPODERMIC NEEDLES

SPONSOR: Rehder

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Health and Mental Health Policy by a vote of 16 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee of Rules- Legislative Oversight by a vote of 10 to 0.

This bill exempts any entity registered with the Department of Health and Senior Services that possesses, distributes, or delivers hypodermic needles or syringes for the purpose of operating a syringe exchange program or otherwise mitigating health risks associated with unsterile injection drug use from provisions of law prohibiting the distribution, delivery, or sale of drug paraphernalia.

This bill also exempts any entity registered with the department that delivers or manufactures hypodermic needles or syringes for the purpose of operating a syringe exchange program or otherwise mitigating health risks associated with unsterile injection drug use from the provisions of law prohibiting the manufacture of drug paraphernalia.

This bill is the same as HCS HB 168 (2019).

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that needle exchange programs are effective and save lives, while saving the state money on addiction and overdose treatment because the exchange programs work to get people help. However, needle exchange programs currently work in the shadows due to unclear state laws, and this bill will address that issue.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Rehder; Wayne Lee; Missouri State Medical Association; BJC Healthcare; Cox Healthcare; Missouri Pharmacy Association; Missouri Nurses Association; Vivent Health; City of Kansas City; Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas City; Empower Missouri; and Bill Kraemier.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.