

HCS HB 2552 -- MO HEALTHNET BENEFITS

SPONSOR: Wright

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Children and Families by a vote of 10 to 1.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 2552.

This bill allows MO HealthNet recipients who would otherwise become ineligible due to an increase in income, to continue to qualify for benefits by paying a premium as specified in the bill.

The bill requires the Department of Social Services to develop a payroll deduction program for this purpose. The department is also required to apply for all necessary waivers from the federal government.

The department must also establish a program to assist MO HealthNet recipients in transitioning off MO HealthNet while working toward gaining employment, increasing income, or gaining work-related education or training.

The provisions of this bill will sunset after two years unless reauthorized by the General Assembly.

The following is a summary of the public testimony from the committee hearing. The testimony was based on the introduced version of the bill.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the benefit cliff is very real, it can keep people on public assistance for longer than they want, so this is an innovative proposal to address the need for health care.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Wright and Missouri Hospital Association.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say the Department is prepared to file the appropriate waivers and work with the requirements.

Testifying on the bill was Caleb Neeley, Division of Social Services (DSS).