

HCS HB 115 -- EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS FOR PERSONS DISCLOSING A
DISABILITY

SPONSOR: Walsh Moore (93)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing
Committee on Workforce Development by a vote of 13 to 0.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB
115.

This bill establishes the "Missouri Employment First Act". The bill requires all state agencies that provide employment-related services or provide services or support to persons with disabilities to coordinate with other agencies, share data where feasible, promote competitive integrated employment, and implement an employment first policy when providing services to persons with disabilities of working age. In addition, state agencies will offer specified information to all working-age persons with disabilities and to the parents or guardians of youth with a disability. The bill provides that this shall not be construed as requiring any state agency or employer to give a preference in hiring to persons with disabilities, or require a state agency to perform an action not in conformity with federal law.

The bill also requires the office of administration to submit a report to the general assembly by December 31st of each year beginning in 2021. The report's content is specified in the bill and relates to the "Missouri as a Model Employer" initiative under executive order 19-16.

This bill is similar to HB 1276 (2020) and similar to HB 517 (2019).

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 bill will provide additional options for certain individuals who need some assistance at work, but who are qualified to work in a competitive environment. The bill attempts to allow all individuals to fulfill their goals and encourages the use of mobility devices and computer technology to create a better work environment. The bill will assist people with different diagnoses and help more individuals to secure full time jobs and pay taxes. The need for social welfare should be reduced.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Walsh Moore; Ann Zimpfer; Arnie C. Dienoff; E. Briana Conley, Paraquad; Elton

Thomas, Paraquad; Greg Kramer, Easterseals Midwest; Mary Thompson; Missouri Disability Empowerment; Missouri Association of Counties for Developmental Disabilities; MARF; Kim Anderson, Center for Human Services; MARF; APSE-Missouri; and Luke Barber.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say individuals should choose which type of support program best meets their needs, whether Sheltered Workshops or other state programs. There should be a range of different types of support available.

Testifying on the bill was the Missouri Association of Sheltered Workshop Managers.

This bill is similar to HB 1276 (2020); and HB 517 (2019).

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.