

HCS HB 148 -- NONECONOMIC DAMAGES

SPONSOR: DeGroot

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Special Committee on Litigation Reform by a vote of 7 to 2.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 148.

This bill specifies that, in any civil action in which the jury is the trier of fact, neither party nor their attorney can seek or make reference to a specific dollar amount or state a range for awards for noneconomic damages for the jury to consider.

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 safeguard the ability of jurors to decide noneconomic damages based on their own values and experiences without being manipulated by definite figures that have not been in the record.

Testifying for the bill were Representative DeGroot; Associated Industries of Missouri; National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB); Missouri Insurance Coalition; Missouri Trucking Association; Missouri Chamber of Commerce; Missouri Organization of Defense Lawyers; United States Chamber of Commerce; Associated Industries of Missouri; and Mark Behrens, American Tort Reform Association.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that it would be unethical for plaintiff's attorneys to not be able to use definite figures but defendant's attorneys would be able to under the original bill.

Testifying against the bill were Arnie Dienoff; Blake Markus; and the Missouri Association of Trial Attorneys.

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.