

HB 319 -- PSYCHOLOGIST'S LICENSE

SPONSOR: Fitzwater

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Corrections and Public Institutions by a vote of 9 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Administrative Oversight by a vote of 9 to 0.

Current statute prohibits placing documentation in a psychologist's file or taking disciplinary action against a psychologist in complaints from individuals who are incarcerated or held under civil detention procedures, unless there is merit to the complaint. If a complaint against a psychologist by an individual who is incarcerated or held under civil detention procedures is found to be without merit, a psychologist may submit a written request to destroy all documentation about the complaint.

This bill adds the same requirements for complaints against a psychologist from an individual who is being evaluated in a criminal proceeding involving mental illness.

This bill is the same as HB 1962 (2020) and HB 441 (2019).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the bill will reduce complaints without a basis in fact and increase the ability to recruit qualified and talented psychologists to work at state facilities. Inmates file a huge percentage of the complaints against psychologists and such filings can cause expense and financial difficulty even when the complaint is adjudicated to be without merit.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Fitzwater; Paul T. Korte, Ph.D., Missouri Psychological Association; Missouri Department of Mental Health; and Arnie C. Dienoff.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

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.