

HCS HB 744 -- ORDERS OF PROTECTION

SPONSOR: Roberts

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Judiciary by a vote of 11 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Administrative Oversight by a vote of 14 to 0.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 744.

This bill specifies that, upon motion by the petitioner and hearing by the court, an order of protection may be renewed up to a period of time not to exceed the lifetime of the respondent. The length of time for which the order of protection is issued or renewed also depends on whether the court makes specific findings during an evidentiary hearing that the respondent poses a serious danger to the physical or mental health of the petitioner or of a minor household member of the petitioner.

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 this is meant to give a judge the option to grant a lifetime protection order for those who are obsessive and will not stop threatening their victims. It is different from when a woman abuses a man. It is a nightmare for the victim to have to repeatedly get new protection orders and have to appear in court again. The experience is like a parole hearing. The intent of this is to apply to the most heinous offenses and to people who pose a serious danger to the people involved. It costs money to have to file for a protection order every single time. So you either have to hire an attorney or do it pro se. Having to represent yourself pro se means your abuser knows exactly where you will be on a certain date at a certain time so that puts victims even more at risk. Some people have to stay with their abusers to protect their kids, especially if they cannot get protection orders. The system is not working.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Roberts; Missouri Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (MCADSV); Janice Thompson-Gehrke; Beth Simpson; and Lisa Saylor.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill submitted written testimony,

which can be found online.

Testifying on the bill was Arnie C. Dienoff.

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.