

HCS HB 852 -- PROHIBITED USE OF PUBLIC FUNDS

SPONSOR: Walsh (50)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Children and Families by a vote of 4 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Legislative Oversight by a vote of 8 to 1 with 1 voting Present.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 852.

The bill prohibits public funds, including MO HealthNet funds, from being used by any clinic, physician's office, or any other place or facility in which abortions are performed or induced or any affiliate or associate of such entity. This provision does not apply to any hospital.

The bill removes MO HealthNet entitlement language from Section 208.153, RSMo, and adds contracting compliance language to align with federal statute for MO HealthNet service providing entities for specified reasons in the bill.

The bill prohibits the use of public funds for any research project that involves abortion services, human cloning, or any prohibited human research as defined in Section 196.1127.

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 tax dollars should not be spent on abortions or certain types of research projects that use fetal tissue. The current statute only applies to life science research so this bill is necessary to prevent human cloning and embryonic stem research. This bill prevents tax dollars being spent on the research, not the research itself and does not impose a penalty.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Walsh; Campaign Life Missouri; Missouri Catholic Conference; and Missouri Right To Life;

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that this bill will interfere with the work of experts in the field of science that are doing life saving work. State politicians should focus on issues that are more important than an expansion of statute that would adversely effect a wide range of research topics. This bill opens researchers or physicians to litigation and will prevent industries from coming to Missouri.

Testifying against the bill were Aaron Lerma; Chelsea Salyer; Mae Winchester; Paul Leykamp; Rebecca O'Connor, American Society for Reproductive Medicine (ASRM); Stephanie Tranen; Susan Gibson; David L Eisenberg; Planned Parenthood Advocates in Missouri; Melanie Dow; American Civil Liberties Union of Missouri; Missouri Coalition for Livesaving Cures (Mo Cures); Jennifer Bernstein, National Council of Jewish Women St. Louis; and Karel Edgar.

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.