

HB 906 -- RURAL PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIANS

SPONSOR: Morse

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rural Community Development by a vote of 15 to 0.

This bill establishes a rural primary care physician grant program as an incentive for physicians to practice and reside in rural counties. The grant requires a written agreement with the Department of Health and Senior Services stipulating that the physician agrees to reside and practice as a primary care physician in a rural county for 5 continuous years and the state will pay a grant of \$10,000 annually for the 5 years contingent upon appropriation of funds. If a physician receiving the grant breaches the agreement penalties will be accessed as outlined in the bill.

The bill creates the "Rural Primary Care Physician Grant Program Fund", to fund the grants and administer the program. The Fund is subject appropriations.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that there is a disparity between the number of rural primary care physicians and urban primary care physicians. This bill would help create incentives for physicians to practice in the rural communities of the state, many of which struggle to attract doctors.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Morse; Missouri Hospital Association; Missouri Academy of Family Physicians; Missouri State Medical Association; Burnell Behavioral Health; and Missouri Farm Bureau. Additional written testimony was submitted in support of the bill.

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.