

HCS SS#2 SB 862 -- PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE PERSONS

SPONSOR: Thompson Rehder (Riley)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on General Laws by a vote of 8 to 6. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules-Legislative Oversight by a vote of 8 to 1.

An HCS was adopted that contains multiple provisions relating to the protection of vulnerable persons. Please see the Summary Sheet for a detailed list of the language in the House Committee Substitute version of the House bill.

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 legislation allows money from social security and other sources to be set aside for children's needs. This legislation ensures that the funds these children are owed are maintained in a way that they can access the funds when needed in foster care and when they transition out of foster care. Supporters say that the portion of this legislation concerning child-care allows for increased numbers of after-school programs and expands available physical spaces for school age youth. Expansion of child-care facilities allows for increased supervision of youth during after-school hours when parents may still be working or running errands. There are plenty of buildings that can currently act as child-care facilities but cannot because of strict licensing requirements that force child-care facilities to be limited to education facilities. This legislation would loosen these requirements, allowing for other types of facilities to be utilized for child-care. Supporters say that the portion of this legislation related to the placement of children ensures that a child's faith is taken into account when that child is placed with a family and ensures that individuals previously convicted of a crime concerning children are not awarded custody. This legislation provides needed protection for children and guidelines for children services during the placement process.

Testifying in person for the bill were Senator Thompson Rehder; The Center For Rights Of Abused Children; Natalie Hampton, Missouri After School Network; Foster Adopt Connect; Foster And Adoptive Care Coalition; Missouri Coalition For Children; Kids Win Missouri; Arnie Dienoff; Missouri Park & Recreation Association; and Missouri Alliance Of YMCAs.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that the language in the legislation is a step back in family law. Particularly in relation to child custody. This legislation reverts back to forcing the child to choose which parent they would like to have custody, if the custodial hearing reaches that point. Forcing a child to make this decision is unfair to the child and the parents.

Testifying in person against the bill were The Lead Lobbyists (Learn, Educate, Advocate, Duplicate).

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say that the legislation was well explained and did not comment further.

Testifying in person on the bill were Ryan Conway, Department of Social Services; and Taylor Jones, Department of Social Services.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony and witnesses testifying online can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.