

HCS HBs 177 & 469 -- MO HEALTHNET COVERAGE OF HEARING-RELATED DEVICES

SPONSOR: Parker

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Health and Mental Health by a vote of 17 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules-Administrative by a vote of 7 to 0.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 177 & 469.

Currently, MO HealthNet payments made for eligible needy children, pregnant women, and blind persons include hearing aids. This bill authorizes MO HealthNet coverage of hearing aids and cochlear implants for all eligible needy persons as described in Chapter 208, RSMo.

This bill is similar to HCS HB 2626 & 1918 (2024).

The following is a summary of the public testimony from the committee hearing. The testimony was based on the introduced version of the bill.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that this is a compassionate bill that addresses existing obstacles to treatment for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing. Over thirty other states provide this type of full coverage in their health plans. Hearing aids and cochlear implants are necessities, not luxuries.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative Parker; Missouri Hearing Society; Arnie Dienoff; Mallory Rusch, Empower Missouri; SSM Health; Christina Koehler; Kay Park; Kate Sinks, Aud, ABAC, CCCA; Missouri Speech Language Hearing Association; Kristen Lewis, Aud.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

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.