

HCS HB 268 -- SOCIAL WORKERS

SPONSOR: Shields

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Higher Education and Workforce Development by a vote of 14 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules-Legislative by a vote of 9 to 0.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 268.

Currently, an individual can become a social worker if he or she has received a baccalaureate or master's degree in social work. The social work programs must be accredited and approved by the Council on Social Work Education.

This bill allows individuals to get a master's degree from a social work program in candidacy and precandidacy for accreditation that is recognized and approved by the committee for social workers.

This bill is similar to HB 216 (2025) and HCS HB 1533 (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.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that this is a necessary change to allow students in the program to have a two year head start on their careers. These programs are vital to the creation of social workers and our State needs more such programs. The current situation is such that a program cannot be accredited until there are graduates and graduates do not want to graduate from an unaccredited program. Additional 30 states have a solution similar to this and if not approved, there will be students and social workers who leave the state.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative Shields; Greg Endres; and Jana Frye, Missouri Western State University.

OPPONENTS: 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.