

HB 709 -- NONDISCLOSURE AGREEMENTS IN CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE CASES

SPONSOR: Seitz

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Judiciary by a vote of 10 to 0.

This bill provides that a nondisclosure agreement by any party to any child sexual abuse claim is not judicially enforceable in a dispute involving any child sexual abuse claim, and must be null and void.

This section will apply to any action commenced on or after August 28, 2025.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that this is also known as "Trey's Law," and it is intended to help survivors of childhood sexual abuse. Through no fault of their own, children and, sometimes, the mentally disabled who were abused are unable to come to terms with what happened to them in the past, due in part to nondisclosure agreements (NDAs) in civil settlements. These are legal mechanisms meant to protect trade secrets, not trauma secrets, but they are misused in civil courts to silence victims. Without NDAs, truth can come to light, and the truth is in the interest of public safety. While this bill cannot fix the horrors these victims have endured, it can prevent the silencing of child crime victims in the future, and this is best for all Missourians.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative Seitz; Chris O'Leary; MO Network Against Child Abuse; Timothy Faber; Joe Alarcon; Elizabeth Phillips; and Keith Dygert.

OPPOSERS: No opposition was voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say they were happy to work with the bill sponsor to come to an agreement on language that can hopefully be moved through the process.

Testifying in person on the bill was Missouri Insurance Coalition.

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.