

HCS HB 918 -- CIVIL ACTIONS

SPONSOR: Black

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Commerce by a vote of 9 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 918.

This bill specifies that, in any civil action for personal injury, death, or property damage caused by a product, the plaintiff must prove that the defendant designed, manufactured, sold, or leased the actual product that caused the injury. Designers, manufacturers, sellers, or lessors of products not identified as having been used, ingested, or encountered by an injured party will not be held liable for any alleged injury.

A person or business entity whose design is copied or otherwise used by a manufacturer without the designer's express authorization will not be subject to liability for personal injury, death, or property damage, even if the use of the design is foreseeable.

The bill does not alter or affect any other provision of law, including mislabeling, fraud, deceptive merchandising practices, that apply to successor entities, distributors, component manufacturers, or manufacturers who use component parts to assemble products for sale as complete units or to the operation of contracts, including a licensing agreement.

This bill is similar to SB 552 (2025).

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 the purpose of the bill is to codify the principle of law that a manufacturer is responsible for the product it makes and sells. Some plaintiffs file lawsuits rejecting this premise and ask the courts to adopt innovator liability. An inventor of the drug who did the research and development and got the FDA approval, is to pay for generic drugs that injures the consumers and others to whom the branded drug company had no relationship with. There should be a different regulatory process for generic and original products. Technological advancements and consumer safety are both important. The Missouri Supreme Court has not spoken on the issue of innovator liability.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative Black; Associated Industries of Missouri; Christopher E. Appel, American Tort Reform Association; Missouri Biotechnology Association; Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Missouri Civil Justice Reform Coalition, Inc.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that the issue is not taking away the rights of Missourians in favor of corporations. We should not provide blanket protection to pharmaceuticals.

Testifying in person against the bill were Chandler Gregg; Arnie Dienoff.

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.