

HCS HB 948 -- WELLNESS CHECKS FOR AT-RISK VETERANS

SPONSOR: Johnson

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Veterans and Armed Forces by a vote of 18 to 1.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 948.

This bill establishes the "Veterans Well-Being and Resource Outreach Act".

The bill requires the Department of Mental Health to develop and implement an initiative to encourage local veterans' organizations and veterans' support organizations to establish programs that provide wellness checks for at-risk veterans, as provided in the bill. The programs must use noninvasive methods to make initial contact with the potentially at-risk veterans. The wellness checks will be twice each month and conducted by a veteran or a person who has received training on medical, mental health, housing, and vocational needs of veterans. The wellness checks can be either in person or by telephone.

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 it is very important that we check in on all of our veterans. Veteran suicide rates are very high in Missouri. We need to do a better job taking care of our veterans and getting them the help they need. This bill will help do that.

Testifying in person for the bill was Representative Johnson.

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.