

SCS SB 1032 -- PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS

SPONSOR: Cauthorn (Sater)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Professional Registration and Licensing by a vote of 12 to 3.

This substitute expands the definition of "supervision" of physician assistants to allow supervising physicians to be available via telecommunications for consultation, assistance, or intervention. Supervising physicians must be present a minimum of 50% of the clinic's hours for supervision and collaboration when utilizing physician assistants. No physician will supervise more than three physician assistants; however, this provision does not apply to physician agreements with hospital employees.

Physician assistants practicing in federally designated health professional shortage areas will be limited to practicing at locations where the supervising physician is personally present for supervision and collaboration for a minimum of 30% of the clinic's hours and no further than 50 miles from the physician assistant for the remaining time the clinic is open.

The substitute requires, after January 1, 2007, that applicants for a physician's assistant license have a master's degree in a health or medical science related field.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2007, FY 2008, and FY 2009.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the bill increases access to care and is not an attempt to set up independent practices. Missouri is the only state that has no onsite percentage supervision requirements.

Testifying for the bill were Senator Cauthorn; and Missouri Hospital Association.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say that it is not for greater access to care, but is an attempt for physician assistants to increase their scope of practice and establish independent practices.

Testifying against the bill were Representative Schaaf; Missouri Association of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons; and Missouri Academy of Family Physicians.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say due to the varying interpretations of court-ordered rules, the State Board of Registration for the Healing Arts would like some clarification

through the statutes.

Others testifying on the bill was State Board of Registration for the Healing Arts.

Bob Dominique, Legislative Analyst