

SB 1177 -- LICENSED PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS

SPONSOR: Barnitz (Cooper, 155)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass by consent" by the Special Committee on Professional Registration and Licensing by a vote of 10 to 0.

This bill defines "licensed professional counselor" and includes these individuals as mental health professionals working in the Division of Comprehensive Psychiatric Services within the Department of Mental Health and the Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse within the Department of Health and Senior Services.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2009, FY 2010, and FY 2011.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the bill will allow licensed professional counselors to conduct assessments for involuntary commitments. Currently, there are not enough mental health care practitioners available to assess individuals who pose a substantial risk to themselves or others.

Testifying for the bill were Senator Barnitz; Division of Comprehensive Psychiatric Services, Department of Mental Health; and Dan Holdinghouse, Missouri Mental Health Association.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.