

SCS SB 47 -- FOSTER CARE SUBSIDIES

SPONSOR: Lamping (Grisamore)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Committee on Children, Families, and Persons with Disabilities by a vote of 11 to 0.

Currently, for the purposes of determining eligibility for a subsidy to a qualified relative who is granted legal guardianship of a child, the term "relative" means grandparent, aunt, uncle, adult sibling of the child, or adult first cousin of the child. This substitute revises the term to include any other person related to the child by blood or affinity.

The substitute also allows a qualified close nonrelated person who is granted legal guardianship of a child to be eligible for any subsidies available to adoptive parents. "Close nonrelated person" means any nonrelated person whose life is so intermingled with the child such that the relationship is similar to a family relationship.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that bill expands the definition of "legal guardian." Currently, the person must be a blood relative. Frequently, neighbors or godparents are asked to be the legal guardian for a child and the bill includes these individuals in the definition of "legal guardian." It allows them to receive subsidies for the care they provide to the child.

Testifying for the bill were Senator Lamping; and Missouri Coalition of Children's Agencies.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.