

HCS HB 1617 -- TELEHEALTH

SPONSOR: Barnes (60)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Health and Mental Health Policy by a vote of 11 to 0. Vote "Do Pass" by the Rules- Administrative Oversight Committee by a vote of 12 to 0.

This bill specifies that the Department of Social Services shall reimburse providers for services provided through telehealth if the providers can ensure that services are rendered meeting the standard of care that would be expected if the services were rendered in person. Telehealth services are the delivery of health care using technology to communicate with a health care provider who is at a different location than the patient. The department cannot make restrictions on providing services via telehealth. The department must reimburse providers of telehealth services in the same manner regardless of the originating and distant sites' proximity, as long as the distance is greater than what could be walked on foot by an average person in fewer than 20 minutes.

The bill specifies that before telehealth services can be provided in a school, the parent or guardian must give authorization.

This bill repeals several provisions relating to telehealth services within MO HealthNet.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that this bill will allow health care providers to be reimbursed for telehealth services from MO HealthNet, just as they are reimbursed in the private sector. This bill will make telehealth more accessible and will help patients.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Barnes; Missouri Association of Rural Health Clinics; Missouri State Medical Association; Missouri Hospital Association; Missouri Psychological Association; Missouri Nurses Association; SSM Health; American Heart Association; Cox Health; BJC Health Care Systems; Mosaic Life Care; Missouri Podiatric Medical Association; Cerner; Missouri State Alliance of YMCA's; and Missouri Retailers Association.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.