

HB 1620 -- DISTRIBUTORS OF HYPODERMIC NEEDLES

SPONSOR: Rehder

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Special Committee on Urban Issues by a vote of 6 to 1. Voted "Do Pass" by the Rules-Legislative Oversight Committee by a vote of 11 to 0.

This bill exempts any entity registered with the Department of Health and Senior Services that possesses, distributes, delivers, or sells hypodermic needles or syringes to be exempt from provisions of law prohibiting the distribution, delivery, or sale of drug paraphernalia.

This bill also exempts any entity registered with the Department of Health and Senior Services that delivers or manufactures hypodermic needles or syringes to be exempt from provisions of law prohibiting the manufacture of drug paraphernalia.

This bill is the same as HB 88 (2017) and similar to HB 2780 (2016).

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that needle exchange participants are five times more likely to enter an addiction treatment program and that needle exchange does not increase drug use. Needle exchange programs help prevent serious disease outbreaks caused by needle sharing. Needle exchange programs also protect non-drug users from disease.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Rehder; Aaron Laxton; Empower Missouri; Chad Sabora, Missouri Network for Opiate Reform And Recovery; Craig Schmid, City of St. Louis Department of Health; and David Stoecker, Missouri Recovery Network.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.