

HB 1736 -- FINANCIAL PROTECTION

SPONSOR: Plocher

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Financial Institutions by a vote of 12 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Legislative Oversight by a vote of 10 to 0.

This bill adds broker-dealers and investment advisors (or investment advisor representatives) to the individuals covered under the Senior Savings Protection Act. Broker-dealers and investment advisors may notify the Department of Health and Senior Services, the Commissioner of Securities, or an immediate family member of his or her reasonable belief that financial exploitation of an vulnerable person has occurred or is being attempted. The department or Commissioner may provide information on the vulnerable person to the reporting individual upon request.

In the instance of a reasonable belief of financial exploitation, the bill allows a broker-dealer, investment advisor, or associated person to refuse a transaction from the account of the vulnerable person for a maximum of 10 business days. To refuse a transaction or disbursement, the broker-dealer, investment advisor, or associated person must send written notice to the vulnerable person, along with contact information for the Investor Protection Hotline. Following the refusal of a transaction or disbursement, the Commissioner or department may enter an order to extend the refusal for the time necessary to protect the vulnerable person, but the agency issuing the order must review the circumstances every 30 days.

The bill specifies a broker-dealer or investment advisor who complies with the Senior Savings Protection Act will be immune to civil liability.

A broker-dealer or investment advisor must provide access to records relevant to the suspected financial exploitation to the department, the Commissioner, or law enforcement.

The Commissioner must update their training website to include resources to assist broker-dealers and investment advisors in the prevention and detection of financial exploitation.

The bill allows a rule to be adopted to require a notice filing by an issuer to include a:

(1) Copy of the Form 1-A or other forms required by the Securities and Exchange Commission;

(2) Consent of service of process and a payment of a fee of \$100;
and

(3) Payment of \$50 fee for any late filing.

This bill raises the maximum civil penalty under the Senior Savings Protection Act from \$5,000 to \$25,000 for each violation. The bill also raises the maximum penalty after a hearing from \$1,000 to \$25,000 for each violation and the penalty for a finding of a violation against an elderly or disabled person from \$5,000 to \$15,000 for each violation.

This bill is similar to HB 354 (2019).

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that this bill protects vulnerable citizens from financial abuse and will bring Missouri up to current standards.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Plocher and Missouri Secretary of State .

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.