

HCS HB 2326 -- HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS

SPONSOR: Helms

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Downsizing State Government by a vote of 6 to 4.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 2326.

This bill prohibits an employer from requiring a health care professional employee who has worked for the employer for at least 24 months to sign a noncompete agreement. Any individual whose work encompasses a majority of research is exempt from this prohibition, as are noncompete agreements that prohibit a former employee from utilizing confidential information.

The following is a summary of the public testimony from the committee hearing. The testimony was based on the introduced version of the bill.

PROponents: Supporters say that health care professionals, already in low supply in some areas, especially rural areas, should not have to leave the area they have lived and worked in, just because they no longer work for a hospital or other corporate employer.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Helms; Missouri State Medical Association; Missouri Association of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons; Missouri Optometric Association; and Washington University.

OPponents: Those who oppose the bill say that lots of the time, hospitals do not even enforce the noncompete agreement, but it could be devastating for smaller hospitals to not be able to protect its investment by using noncompete agreements.

Testifying against the bill were Missouri Hospital Association; BJC Health Care; Cox Health; SSM Healthcare; and St. Luke's Health System.