



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
**WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM**

BILL NUMBER: <b>HB 531</b>		DATE: <b>2/3/2021</b>	
COMMITTEE: <b>Judiciary</b>			
<b>TESTIFYING:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>ANGELA</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>angela.allofusnone@yahoo.com</b>		ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/3/2021 12:00 AM</b>
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The reason why the Primary Caretaker Bill is so important to me is because I have seen first hand the devastating effects of not having a parent in the home. Some years ago I volunteered in a reading program at an inner city school. The program was for students in 5th grade who were not doing well in reading. I encountered this one student, Rodney. He seemed to get along well with his friends. He actually did quite well in school the Program Director shared with me. His area of struggle was reading. I've always loved Reading. So I asked the Director if I could work with him one on one. I tried finding different books that I thought he would enjoy. Nothing seemed to work. Finally I asked why do you dislike reading so much Rodney? This is what he said, "I use to love reading. I would read all the time. My Mom and I would read together. She loved reading too." He said this with a slight smile on his face. To say the least I was shocked. This wasn't the answer I was expecting. I asked him why did you stop? He replied, "She went to jail for stealing. Everytime I think about reading. It hurts too much. It reminds me of when we read together." By taking the primary caretaker out of the home, we are not giving justice to our children. We are not equipping them with the tools they will need to be successful in life. Rodney's story is just one among hundreds. We must support this bill if we want to give the next generation a fighting chance! These are our children! They deserve it! Angela McCurry All of Us or None-St. Louis Chapter



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<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>ANGELA MCCURRY</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>angela.allofusnone@yahoo.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>		SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/3/2021 12:00 AM</b>
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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>ARNIE "HONEST-ABE" DIENOFF-STATE PUBLIC ADVOCATE</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>ArnieDienoff@Yahoo.Com</b>		ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/3/2021 12:00 AM</b>
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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>BARBARA BAKER</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>314-771-5207</b>	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: <b>CENTER FOR WOMEN IN TRANSITION</b>		TITLE: <b>ADVOCACY DIRECTOR</b>	
ADDRESS: <b>7716 S BROADWAY ST.</b>			
CITY: <b>ST. LOUIS</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>63111</b>
EMAIL: <b>barbbaker@cwitstl.org</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/3/2021 12:00 AM</b>	

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Dear Chairman Evans, I am writing to you on behalf of the Center for Women in Transition in support of HB 531/Primary Caretaker Bill. The Center is a St. Louis-based nonprofit that assists and advocates for women in the criminal justice system to support their successful transition back to their families and our community. As the Center's Advocacy Director, I have been advocating for alternatives to incarceration for over 20 years. The Center provides holistic services that support women in gaining housing stability, financial security, and emotional wellness. The Caretaker Bill would profoundly impact the lives of many of the women and families we serve. I came to the organization after being locked up for a nonviolent crime and losing everything. Because of my substance use disorder, I lost my house, I lost my job, and my children were sent to live with family members. I take full responsibility for my behavior, yet incarceration did not help me regain my home, my job, or a relationship with my children. In fact, it exacerbated those problems and caused further instability for my children. Rather, what helped me gain stability was receiving support and resources from my community. With assistance from community programs, I became sober and eventually regained relationships with my children. In working with women who have had similar experiences as me, I continually see families broken apart when the primary caretaker is incarcerated. Data shows that removing a primary caretaker from a family via incarceration is linked to poor health outcomes for the impacted children. I am also able to witness the profound impact that our program has on women and their children when granted the opportunity to participate in our program as an alternative to incarceration. When given proper tools and support, I see moms and their children stabilize and thrive. Our program works: last year only 6% of our clients recidivated, compared to 20% of women who recidivated across Missouri. Considering that incarceration costs roughly \$45,000 annually, compared to \$14,000 per woman per year in our program, community-based programs like ours are far more cost effective and lead to better outcomes for women, their families, and our community. A Community-Based Sentencing model, as promoted through HB 531, holds people accountable for their actions while also keeping families and communities together. I urge you and your colleagues to support the Caretaker Bill to keep Missouri families together. Sincerely, Barbara Baker Advocacy Director



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>REGISTERED LOBBYIST:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>ELIZABETH (LIZA) WEISS</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>2026410041</b>	
REPRESENTING: <b>MISSOURI APPLESEED</b>		TITLE: <b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR</b>	
ADDRESS: <b>100 NORTH TUCKER BLVD, ROOM 840</b>			
CITY: <b>ST LOUIS</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>63101</b>
EMAIL: <b>lweiss@appleseednetwork.org</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>In-Person</b>		SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/3/2021 12:00 AM</b>
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I am the executive director of Missouri Appleseed, a nonprofit that works on legal policy issues at the intersection of public health and the criminal justice system. I am testifying in favor of House Bill 531. House Bill 531 instructs judges to consider community-based sentences instead of incarceration for primary caregivers of minor children. I support House Bill 531 because research shows that incarcerating parents is bad for children's health, food and housing security, and life prospects. Children with incarcerated parents are more likely to suffer from physical health problems like asthma, migraines, high cholesterol, and later-life heart attack. They are also more likely to suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, clinical anxiety, and clinical depression. These mental health conditions can be dangerous – even deadly. Children who experience the incarceration of a family member are 2.5 times more likely to attempt suicide at some point in their lives. Incarcerating parents hurts children economically. Most parents in prison were their children's primary financial support prior to their arrest. Young children whose fathers have been incarcerated are less likely to have enough food on a regular basis and more likely to become homeless. Incarcerating parents doesn't just hurt children's health. It also hurts their educational attainment and future prospects. When you incarcerate a parent, their children are less likely to graduate high school. They are also less likely to graduate college, especially when the incarcerated parent is a mother. Putting parents in prison and jail contributes to intergenerational cycles of criminal-justice involvement. Children whose parents have been incarcerated are more likely to have conduct problems and engage in delinquent behavior. When these children become young adults, they are more likely to have a substance abuse problem, to have spent time in jail, and to have a felony charge than their peers whose parents have never been incarcerated. Giving parents noncustodial sentences won't just protect the health and future of children. It could also decrease recidivism. In general, people who complete community-based sentences are less likely to commit new crimes than people released from prison. People convicted of crimes who maintain strong family relationships are less likely to recidivate, and community-based sentences preserve family relationships. Giving parents community-based sentences could also save the state money. It's more expensive to put someone in prison than to supervise someone on probation. Moreover, about 10% of Missouri's foster children entered foster care due to parental incarceration, and researchers estimate that Missouri foster care costs more than \$10,000 per child per year in foster-family reimbursement, court payments, and case management. In addition to reducing foster care costs, keeping children with their parents would reduce caseloads for overworked Children's Division workers. In conclusion, encouraging judges to consider non-custodial sentences for primary caregivers of minor children is both the smart thing to do and the right thing to do. When parents aren't dangerous to others, we should let them keep being parents – for their children's sake.



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WITNESS NAME: <b>ELIZABETH WEISS</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>2026410041</b>	
REPRESENTING: <b>MISSOURI APPLESEED</b>		TITLE: <b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR</b>	
ADDRESS: <b>100 NORTH TUCKER BLVD, ROOM 840</b>			
CITY: <b>SAINT LOUIS</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>63101</b>
EMAIL: <b>lizagrote@gmail.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>In-Person</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/3/2021 12:00 AM</b>	
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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>REGISTERED LOBBYIST:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>JEFF SMITH</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>314-323-0915</b>	
REPRESENTING: <b>MISSOURI APPLESEED</b>		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: <b>7 THE ORCHARDS</b>			
CITY: <b>ST. LOUIS</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>63132</b>
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/3/2021 12:00 AM</b>	
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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>KAITLIN OWENS</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>8044059559</b>	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: <b>AMERICAN CONSERVATIVE UNION</b>		TITLE: <b>DEPUTY DIRECTOR</b>	
ADDRESS: <b>1199 N. FAIRFAX ST., SUITE 500</b>			
CITY: <b>ALEXANDRIA</b>		STATE: <b>VA</b>	ZIP: <b>22314</b>
EMAIL: <b>kowens@conservative.org</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/3/2021 12:00 AM</b>	
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Dear Chairman Evans and Committee Members: As a conservative organization, the American Conservative Union "ACU" is focused on sensible criminal justice policy, we write in strong support of maintaining familial bonds via probation. The policies contained in House Bill 531 would create more community - based sentencing options – options that hold offenders accountable while offering them a manageable path to achieve rehabilitation and redemption. Failing to act wastes precious taxpayer dollars without any additional public safety benefit. In contrast, reforming the system will reduce bureaucratic waste and free up resources for more effective public safety strategies, while reducing incarceration and family separation. Regular and meaningful contact with family members has been shown to consistently reduce recidivism, encourage rehabilitation, and ultimately lead to increased public safety. Maintaining familial bonds, when possible, clearly signals that HB 531 is dedicated to helping incarcerated individuals stay connected with loved ones and the outside world and build the foundation for rehabilitation and a successful re-entry into society. Our mission at the American Conservative Union Foundation is to educate Americans about conservative solutions to the country's most pressing problems. ACUF's Nolan Center for Justice promotes policies that improve public safety, reduce government cost, and protect human dignity. Criminal Justice Reform is a high priority for ACUF, and it has been highlighted at each of ACUF's Conservative Political Action Conferences (CPAC) for over a decade. Keeping incarcerated individuals connected with their families is a win-win. Those behind bars are less likely to reoffend if they are able to maintain strong family bonds. But equally important is keeping parents connected with their children. This helps to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty and crime. In the United States today, 1 in 14 children have had a parent incarcerated at some point in their lives. The effects of an incarcerated parent on children can be emotionally traumatic, but studies show that children who stay in contact with an incarcerated parent exhibit fewer disruptive and anxious behavior. But at its core, it is a starkly conservative bill, focusing on public safety first. It is based on evidence, instead of emotion. And it moves us away from our national addiction of filling prisons when we know there's a better path forward. As such, we urge you to support this important piece of legislation in which Chairman Evans has introduced and led. Thank you for your time and this opportunity, Kaitlin Owens Deputy Director, Nolan Center for Justice American Conservative Union





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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>PATTY</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>pattyberger@sbcglobal.net</b>		ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/3/2021 12:00 AM</b>
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February 3, 2021 Re: HB 531 Dear Chairman Evans and the House Judiciary Committee, Please accept this letter in support of HB 531 as my testimony. I am a formerly incarcerated woman who spent many years going in and out of prison in Missouri. Due to an untreated addiction to drugs and several felony convictions for non-violent crimes, I found myself serving more than 14 years over a 20 year period. I was a single mother of two small children, whose father had been murdered buying drugs in 1982 during my second pregnancy. I went to prison eleven times and was finally given the opportunity for long term treatment on 1998, which was the last time I went to prison. After a relapse in 2001, I was sent to 120 day treatment in the St. Louis County Jail. I have to wonder how life could have been different for our family, if there was a HB 531 in 1983. Maybe I would have had an opportunity to stay in my community and mother my children. My children are now adults but we still struggle with the time I spent away from them and can never get back. There is no way to make up for those years. Believe me, I have tried. When I was going to college, I wrote a paper about alternatives to incarceration. My research for that paper gave me a new perspective. The State of Missouri had spent approximately \$352,000 incarcerating me over that 20 year period. The cost of drug treatment twice was about \$13,800. My children suffered without their parents. My community literally paid for all of this. Were these the intended consequences of incarcerating me? I think not. I am now a social worker and a substance use disorder counselor. I advocate on behalf of people just like me. Men and women caught in the criminal legal system. Diversion courts have worked for years to build our communities and support families going through circumstances beyond their control. Drug court, Veteran court, Mental Health court, why not Primary Caregiver court? Thank you accepting my testimony in support of HB 531. I'm available, if you have any questions. Respectfully, Patty Berger 4870 Calvin Ave, St. Louis, MO 63115 pattyberger@sbcglobal.net 314-224-9171



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<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>PATTY BERGER</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>pattyberger@sbcglobal.net</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>		SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/3/2021 12:00 AM</b>
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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>REGISTERED LOBBYIST:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>RITA LINHARDT</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>573-635-7239</b>	
REPRESENTING: <b>MISSOURI CATHOLIC CONFERENCE</b>		TITLE: <b>SENIOR STAFF ASSOCIATE</b>	
ADDRESS: <b>P.O. BOX 1022</b>			
CITY: <b>JEFFERSON CITY</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>65016</b>
EMAIL: <b>linhardtr@mocatholic.org</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>		SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/3/2021 12:00 AM</b>

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The MCC supports HB 531 as a means of encouraging community-based alternatives to incarceration. It is estimated that 66% of female offenders in Missouri have one or more dependent children. Community-based programs are shorter in duration than prisons, provide a variety of services and are much easier for family reunification.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>SAMANTHA LUND</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>samantha.g.lund@gmail.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>		SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/3/2021 12:00 AM</b>
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As a medical student in Missouri, I helped shape the Missouri State Medical Association's policy on supporting the various health care needs of children with incarcerated parents. This effort was rooted in a colleague's personal life- her sister has been incarcerated for most of her child's life. Though this young boy has been raised by caring grandparents, he has required added services, such as therapy and mental health counseling, that have been challenging to access. Data shows children have fewer adverse health effects when they are raised by an unincarcerated caregiver. If parents who have committed certain nonviolent offenses can remain with their children, those kids will be at a decreased risk for longitudinal adverse health outcomes. Data supports this and I believe Missouri can positively impact many families by providing judges with this option.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>REGISTERED LOBBYIST:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>SHANTEL DOOLING</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>573-353-3828</b>	
REPRESENTING: <b>MISSOURI STATE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION</b>		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: <b>113 MADISON STREET</b>			
CITY: <b>JEFFERSON CITY</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>65101</b>
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/3/2021 12:00 AM</b>	
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