



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 132		DATE: 1/24/2023
COMMITTEE: Veterans		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ARNIE C. "HONEST-ABE" DIENOFF-STATE PUBLIC ADVOCATE		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: arniedienoff@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/24/2023 11:10 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

I am in Support of this Legislation to Audit and look into Practices and Polices of the Missouri Veteran Homes. I would like the Bill to be Amended to provide that a Third-Party Professional Audit the Missouri Veteran Homes for Proper-Care and Following Properly Accepted Protocols.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: JENNIFER CARTER DOCHLER		PHONE NUMBER: 573-356-4109	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: MISSOURI FOUNDATION FOR HEALTH		TITLE: DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS	
ADDRESS: 4254 VISTA AVENUE			
CITY: ST. LOUIS		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63110
EMAIL: jdochler@mffh.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/23/2023 5:07 PM	

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The Missouri Foundation for Health is an independent nonprofit foundation whose mission is to eliminate underlying causes of health inequities, transform systems, and Missourians to thrive. Like you, we want Missouri to be a healthy place to live and work. The Foundation serves 84 counties across Missouri and the city of St. Louis. We are submitting information-only testimony that might be helpful for the committee to consider. One of our current strategic initiatives focuses on firearm suicide prevention including veteran firearm suicide. We would be happy to provide additional information from either our staff overseeing the initiative or one of our related funded projects. Suicide is a public health crisis in the U.S., with rates rising more than 30% in 25 states between 1999 and 2016. Rates have increased among both sexes, all racial and ethnic groups, all age groups under 75, and in all geographic settings. In Missouri, suicide rates have grown even faster than the national average. At 61%, firearms are the leading means of suicide in Missouri by a wide margin. Despite the role firearms play in a majority of suicides in the region, strategies to address firearm suicide are absent or underdeveloped within statewide and community-based suicide prevention plans. Firearms are a uniquely lethal method of suicide. In Missouri, six out of every 10 suicides involved a firearm, with approximately 85% of attempts ending in death. Research shows that a person can think about suicide for an extended period, but the decision to act in a brief and vulnerable moment can happen in less than one hour. Having access to a firearm at this time can determine whether someone lives or dies. Through this strategic initiative, we are working to reduce firearm suicides in targeted populations, such as veterans. We are doing this through promoting effective messaging that shifts the narrative about firearms and suicide, and increasing the focus on this issue within statewide comprehensive suicide prevention work that is in development. References available upon request.