



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: SJR 71		DATE: 4/2/2024	
COMMITTEE: Pensions			
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: ADAM L. WARREN		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:		SUBMIT DATE: 4/2/2024 12:00 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: SJR 71		DATE: 4/2/2024	
COMMITTEE: Pensions			
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: DWAYNE CAREY		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:		SUBMIT DATE: 4/2/2024 12:00 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: SJR 71		DATE: 4/2/2024	
COMMITTEE: Pensions			
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: MELISSA LORTS		PHONE NUMBER: 573-645-8131	
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI SHERIFFS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM		TITLE: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE: MO	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 4/2/2024 12:00 AM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: SJR 71		DATE: 4/2/2024	
COMMITTEE: Pensions			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" 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@mail.com	ATTENDANCE: In-Person		SUBMIT DATE: 4/2/2024 11:06 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

I am very opposed to this Bill and creating yet another Pension System by Fooling the Voters into Approving a State Constitutional Amendment and another Pension for County Sheriff's, County Prosecuting Attorneys & Circuit Attorneys. These Elected Office-Holders are already in the L.A.G.E.R.S. Pension System for Local and County Employees in Saint Charles County, Saint Louis County, Jefferson County and Franklin County, along with the City of Saint Louis. It is NOT fair for the large Counties to take on the load and pay for Pension Contributions in other Counties. Each County shall be responsible to provide their Elected County Officials with Pension, Salaries and Benefits. Defeat this Bill!



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: SJR 71		DATE: 4/2/2024	
COMMITTEE: Pensions			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: KORTNIE HUDDLESTON		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: kortniehuddleston@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 4/2/2024 3:01 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

I oppose this proposed amendment. The salaries and benefits of sheriffs, prosecuting attorneys, and circuit attorneys should come from the local government and taxes approved by local municipalities and not funded by court costs and fees. Funding these salaries and benefits from fees incentivizes criminalization and also does not provide a stable source for these salaries and benefits.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: SJR 71		DATE: 4/2/2024	
COMMITTEE: Pensions			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: MICHAEL DREYER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: mdreyer93@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 4/2/2024 2:59 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

I oppose this proposed amendment. The salaries and benefits of sheriffs, prosecuting attorneys, and circuit attorneys should come from the local government and taxes approved by local municipalities and not funded by court costs and fees. Funding these salaries and benefits from fees incentivizes criminalization and also does not provide a stable source for these salaries and benefits.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: SJR 71		DATE: 4/2/2024	
COMMITTEE: Pensions			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: PRIYA SARATHY JONES		PHONE NUMBER: 803-261-1159	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: FINES AND FEES JUSTICE CENTER		TITLE: DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS: 1325 G ST NW, SUITE #500			
CITY: WASHINGTON		STATE: DC	ZIP: 20005
EMAIL: psjones@ffjc.us	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 3/29/2024 12:17 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO SJR 71: Constitutional Amendment to Levy Certain Costs and Fees to Support the Salaries and Benefits of Sheriffs, Prosecuting Attorneys, and Circuit Attorneys.TO:

Hon. Barry Hovis, Chair, Missouri House of Representatives Pensions Committee Hon. Richard West, Vice-Chair, Missouri House of Representatives Pensions Committee Hon. Richard Brown, Ranking Member, Missouri House of Representatives Pensions Committee Members of the Missouri House of Representatives Pensions Committee FROM: Priya Sarathy Jones, Deputy Executive Director, Fines and Fees Justice CenterDATE: March 29, 2024Dear Chairman Hovis, Vice-Chair West, Ranking Member Brown, and Members of the Pensions Committee: While the law enforcement, prosecuting attorney's and circuit attorney's salaries and benefits should be adequately funded, the levying of fees and costs is an ineffective and counterproductive way to fund them. Ultimately, fees and costs assessed in the criminal justice system are a notoriously unreliable, often uncollectable source of revenue. Further, an increased reliance on fees and costs can ultimately harm public safety and work against the interests of law enforcement. The Fines and Fees Justice Center (FFJC) urges the Committee to consider alternative funding mechanisms rather than fees and costs and to oppose SJR 71. Fines and Fees Justice CenterThe Fines and Fees Justice Center is a national hub for information, advocacy, and collaboration for the reform of fines and fees. Our mission is to eliminate fees in the justice system, ensure that fines are equitably imposed and enforced, and end abusive collection practices. Fines and fees in the justice system hurt millions of Americans – entrenching poverty, exacerbating racial disparities, diminishing trust in our courts and police, and trapping people in perpetual cycles of punishment. Working with directly impacted communities, FFJC is building broad-based coalitions from across the political spectrum including grassroots organizations, judges, prosecutors, public defenders, legislators, law enforcement, and faith-based and advocacy organizations, all of whom are focused on ending the harms inflicted by fines and fees. Fees and Costs are an Unreliable Funding Source for Law EnforcementWhile this resolution is intended to increase funding for law enforcement salaries and pensions, fees and costs are an inappropriate revenue source for funding critical government obligations, such as law enforcement salaries and retirement funds. Fees and costs assessed in the criminal justice system are notoriously expensive to collect, given that these fees are typically assessed against people who cannot pay them. One study into the cost of collections of fines and fees in Texas and New Mexico found that the amount counties were spending to collect fees assessed in the criminal justice system was 121 times what the government spends to collect taxes. Much of this debt is completely uncollectable and in some cases, the amount of money spent on collections is greater than the revenue generated. Other sources of government revenue are more efficient and more reliable and hence a better approach to funding

salaries and benefits of Missouri law enforcement, prosecuting attorneys and circuit attorneys. Forcing Law Enforcement to Chase Uncollectable Debt Hurts Public Safety Increased reliance on fees can also jeopardize public safety and contribute to more social harm. When fines and fees go unpaid, judges may issue arrest warrants for failing to pay, leading to law enforcement arresting people for not paying financial obligations – most often because they are too poor to pay. Or, law enforcement may arrest people for driving with a suspended license, even though the sole reason for the suspension is not paying fines and fees. The time spent on these debt collection and enforcement efforts diverts law enforcement and courts from their core responsibilities. Further, turning police into tax collectors destroys police-community relationships which are critical for police to solve crimes and keep communities safe. In fact, the collection of fines and fees by law enforcement has been found to be associated with lower clearance rates for more serious crimes. One study found that every 1% increase in revenue from fines, fees and forfeitures correlated with a more than 6 percent decrease in the violent crime clearance rate and 8 percentage point decrease in the property crime clearance rate. With 64% of violent crimes going unsolved in Missouri, the state should be working to reduce reliance on fees, in order to allow law enforcement to focus on addressing the low clearance rate. Increased Fees Are Associated with Increased Recidivism Rates When people lack the money to pay their fees, it may lead to their engaging in additional criminal activity to find the money to pay what they owe, in order to avoid being arrested or incarcerated for not paying fees. One Alabama survey of more than 900 people with court debt found nearly 2 in 5 people admitted to engaging in criminal behavior for purposes of paying their court debt, including selling drugs, theft, sex work, and writing bad checks. Similar results were found in a study in New Mexico, in which just over 40% of the 500 respondents admitted to committing a crime to get money to pay fines and fees. A study of misdemeanor fees in Milwaukee, Wisconsin found that a new fee of \$200 on all misdemeanor convictions increased the overall likelihood of re-offense within two years. Imposing New Fees is Contrary to National Trends States like Texas, Louisiana, and Oklahoma have recently passed bills to eliminate fees, recognizing the harm that fees impose and the need for more reliable funding for essential government services like law enforcement and courts. The American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) Criminal Justice Task Force recently recognized the public safety harm that comes from reliance on fees in their Resolution in Support of Effective Strategies to Support Law Enforcement and Reduce Violent Crime. The ALEC policy encourages state policymakers to adequately fund law enforcement and to “stop forcing law enforcement to fund significant percentages of their budgets through fines, fees, and forfeitures and [to] instead fund them through a consistent and transparent budgetary process.” Rather than authorizing new and higher fees and costs, the Missouri legislature should work to eliminate fees and identify ways to reliably fund government obligations in a way that keeps communities safe. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony. We respectfully urge the Committee to vote against SJR 71. Priya Sarathy Jones Deputy Executive Director Fines and Fees Justice Center psjones@ffjc.us



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: SJR 71		DATE: 4/2/2024	
COMMITTEE: Pensions			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: SHARON GEUEA JONES		PHONE NUMBER: 573-808-2156	
REPRESENTING: MO NAACP		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 910 W BROADWAY			
CITY: COLUMBIA		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65203
EMAIL: sharon@jonesadvocacy.com	ATTENDANCE: In-Person		SUBMIT DATE: 4/2/2024 9:04 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.
Fees create a negative incentive to give more tickets and charge unnecessary crimes.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: SJR 71		DATE: 4/2/2024	
COMMITTEE: Pensions			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: SUSAN GIBSON		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: Onesuegibson@protonmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 3/30/2024 5:37 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: SJR 71		DATE: 4/2/2024	
COMMITTEE: Pensions			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: LEONARD CHARLES GILROY		PHONE NUMBER: 713-927-8777	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: REASON FOUNDATION		TITLE: VICE PRESIDENT	
ADDRESS: 5737 MESMER AVE			
CITY: LOS ANGELES		STATE: CA	ZIP: 90230
EMAIL: leonard.gilroy@reason.org	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 4/1/2024 4:49 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Chairman Hovis and members of the Pensions Committee, We are managing directors of the Pension Integrity Project at Reason Foundation, which has played a key technical assistance role on dozens of bipartisan pension reforms across 10 states over the past several years, including major efforts to overhaul and restore the solvency of major state pension systems in Texas, Michigan, Florida, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona and North Dakota. Thank you for the opportunity to submit technical comments regarding SJR71. The use of fines and fees in criminal and civil proceedings is a complex and controversial topic, largely because, as the Missouri Supreme Court found in 2021, they can serve as a barrier to equal access to the criminal justice system by placing financial obstacles in front of those navigating the justice system, disproportionately affecting lower-income populations. The proposal also violates some basics of public finance and fiscal stewardship. Public pensions are constitutionally protected benefits promised to public workers, and government employers are obligated to ensure they are paid in full, regardless of market conditions or revenue generation. Further, law enforcement and courts are core functions of government that should be funded through legislative appropriations, not fees. Regardless of past practice, it would be imprudent to revive a policy to fund pension contributions with dedicated fine/fee revenues because those revenues can fluctuate over time, while pension liabilities are always locked in. Fine and fee revenues may also hit a plateau while pension liabilities—and the employer contributions needed to fund them each year—keep rising. Long-term pension solvency demands funding discipline and proper methods. Local governments in Missouri need to wean themselves off fines and fees to cover pension costs and instead just pay for their pension promises out of general appropriations. Claims that a failure to rededicate fine and fee revenue to pensions will force those pension systems to insolvency are simply false: Governments are legally obligated to fund pensions that they've promised, and if one revenue source is deemed unconstitutional, then local governments need to follow kitchen-table economics and simply reprioritize their funding, delay capital purchases, alter spending plans, and the like. Outside of Illinois, it is fairly rare for states to use fees and other targeted revenue streams to cover pension contributions because of the aforementioned hazards. Several years ago, Arizona abandoned a statutory funding policy that explicitly dedicated court fees to its state pension system covering judicial officers and elected officials, opting to just pay the full bill from general appropriations and abandoning the tether to dedicated fees. There is a lot of flexibility in how to address these pension systems' ongoing funding challenges. Newly hired sheriffs and prosecutors could easily fold into one of several other existing pension systems that have better funding mechanisms in a way that would maintain the same benefit levels and also reduce unnecessary bureaucratic duplication among various local government pension systems in Missouri. Gov. Mike Parson's administration has proposed a two-year, \$5 million total appropriation to temporarily cover

pension contributions, allowing more time to develop a workable funding solution. Funding sheriff and prosecutor pensions with fines and fees was a historical anachronism, and there is an opportunity to modernize these pensions' funding policy and avoid tying fluctuating revenue streams to fixed, constitutionally guaranteed retirement liabilities. If governments are going to offer pensions, they need to be willing to directly appropriate the funding to cover those promises as an administrative "cost of doing business," and not attempt to ask the criminal justice system to bear the burden for covering governments' financial obligations. Further, perpetuating the use of fines and fees for sheriff and prosecutor pension systems would reinstate a set of perverse incentives that tie pension contributions to the volume of traffic citations, arrests, prosecutions, and other aspects of the criminal justice system. Thank you very much for the opportunity to submit testimony. We stand ready to respond to any questions the committee may have related to this subject. Contacts:• Leonard Gilroy, Senior Managing Director, Pension Integrity Project: leonard.gilroy@reason.org• Ryan Frost, Managing Director, Pension Integrity Project: ryan.frost@reason.org