



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 1525		DATE: 3/10/2025	
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues			
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: CADE TREMAIN		PHONE NUMBER: 573-634-3511	
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 428 EAST CAPITOL AVENUE			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65101
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 3/10/2025 12:00 AM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: CHRIS HOFFMAN		PHONE NUMBER: 636-797-5000	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: JEFFERSON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE		TITLE: LIEUTENANT	
ADDRESS: 400 1ST STREET			
CITY: HILLSBORO		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63050
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 3/10/2025 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: CHRIS SCHOEMAN		PHONE NUMBER: 636-541-1928	
REPRESENTING: ST. LOUIS COUNTY POLICE ASSOCIATION		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 18500 GELISON AVE			
CITY: CHESTERFIELD		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63005
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 3/10/2025 12:00 AM	

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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: CORY HOGAN		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: MISSOURI STATE COUNCIL OF FIRE FIGHTERS; PROFESSIONAL FIRE FIGHTERS OF EASTERN MO. IAFF LOCAL 2665		TITLE: LEGISLATIVE ADVISOR, EXECUTIVE VP	
ADDRESS: 115 MCMENAMY RD			
CITY: ST. PETERS		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63376
EMAIL: cory.hogan@iaff2665.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/10/2025 7:17 AM	
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The Missouri State Council of Fire Fighters would like to go on record in support of HB1525. Missouri's fire service is and has been seeing a decline in recruitment and retention for years. Burnout for our Paramedics and Dispatchers is at an all time high. Our academy classes and paramedic program's current enrollment do not reflect enrollment numbers of the past. Our rural and municipal fire departments face challenges retaining qualified, experienced Fire Fighter/Paramedics. This bill would provide a mechanism for our members to pursue continued education in their career field regardless of where they work, and encourage Fire Fighters, Paramedics, and Dispatchers to stay on the job while their dependents finish school. This bill is a way of leveling the playing field for departments across the state. I appreciated the Chairman and Committee members' time. Respectfully, Cory Hogan, MSCFF



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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: JOHN BARDGETT		PHONE NUMBER: 314-409-2855	
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI COMMUNITY COLLEGE ASSN		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 16141 SWINGLEY RIDGE ROAD, SUITE 110			
CITY: CHESTERFIELD		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63017
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 3/10/2025 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: MEAGAN HOWERTON		PHONE NUMBER:	
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI AMBULANCE ASSOCIATION		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: PO BOX 156			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65102
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 3/10/2025 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: MICHAEL BISHOP		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: mikeylocal2952@gmail.com		ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 3/7/2025 10:36 AM

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I have been a firefighter in Kirksville for just shy of 19 years. I started while my wife was pregnant with my oldest child, who is graduating high school in May and is currently making his college decisions. I knew college was expensive, but as we visited schools over the last year I have been shocked to find out how much more expensive college has become since my wife and I were in school in the early 2000's. My son is planning on attending Missouri S&T in the fall, and the amount of debt he will have to take on is nauseating. College costs have far outpaced wage increases. This has happened for many reasons, but among the reasons is decreasing state support for higher education over the past 40-50 years. Providing more support to make college more affordable for any reason, in my opinion, is a fantastic use of taxpayer money. It will only pay dividends to the state as more people are able to afford to go to college and justify the expense in the process. A more well educated population can only have positive benefits (recruitment of businesses being one of them). Legislation such as this will also make it easier for children of firefighters, police officers and dispatchers to graduate with little to no debt. Not only does this put them on more sound financial footing as they begin their careers, but it would help keep money in the state. Rather than making payments on high interest loans (often to out-of-state banks who are in the business of making sure loans are never paid off), graduates will have more discretionary spending money, much of which will certainly go back into the Missouri state and local economies. My daughter is thinking about going to college to become a teacher, but it is very, very hard to justify the expense even of state schools in order to get a degree to qualify for a job where in which the starting pay is maybe mid-40 thousand dollars per year. As you know, recruitment in the fire service has become increasingly difficult over the last 20 years. Providing such a significant benefit as supplementing tuition for dependents of first responders will have a great impact not only on recruitment, but retention of those already in emergency services. I fully support this legislation, not just because of how much it will benefit my kids, but because of how much it will benefit the entire State of Missouri.



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WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: PAUL WAGNER		PHONE NUMBER: 529-7195
REPRESENTING: COUNCIL ON PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION		TITLE:
ADDRESS: 717 WESTPORT DRIVE		
CITY: COLUMBIA		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65203
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 3/10/2025 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: TOM DEMPSEY		PHONE NUMBER: 636-288-7461	
REPRESENTING: MO ASSOCIATION OF CAREER FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICTS		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 3103 BUCKSKIN PATH			
CITY: ST. CHARLES		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63301
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 3/10/2025 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ANTHONY STEMATZ-BREITLING		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: stembreit@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/9/2025 10:04 PM
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I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 1514, HB 1525, & HB 1527, which would use taxpayer dollars to cover college tuition for public safety personnel and their dependents without income restrictions. While I recognize the vital role that law enforcement and public safety personnel play in our communities, these bills are an unfair and HB 1527 is a fiscally irresponsible expansion of the "Fast Track Workforce Incentive Grant."1. Unfair Advantage Over Other Hardworking FamiliesThe current "Fast Track Workforce Incentive Grant" is designed to provide financial aid to students based on eligibility and income requirements, ensuring that those with the greatest need receive assistance. By adding public safety personnel and their dependents without income restrictions, these bills prioritize one group over other hardworking families who also struggle to afford college tuition. There are countless middle-class families who do not qualify for need-based aid yet still face significant financial hardship when paying for higher education. Why should public safety personnel receive this special privilege at the expense of other taxpayers?2. Lack of Justification for Expanding BenefitsThere is no compelling evidence that public safety personnel and their dependents face greater financial barriers to higher education than other Missouri residents. Many law enforcement officers already have access to competitive salaries, pension benefits, and existing tuition assistance programs. Providing tuition coverage without an income cap creates an inequitable system where higher-earning families in law enforcement benefit at the expense of lower-income families who may be excluded from similar financial aid opportunities.4. Alternative Solutions for Supporting Public Safety PersonnelThe idea of incentivizing workers to come to Missouri by offering college tuition benefits is worth considering. However, if Missouri wants to attract and retain valuable professionals, why not extend these benefits to scientists, healthcare workers, and educators—fields that are also critical to public welfare? Instead of prioritizing law enforcement alone, the state could design a more inclusive program that supports a wider range of essential workers.5. A Better Use of Public FundsRather than funding tuition exclusively for law enforcement families, Missouri should consider making community college free for all residents. Expanding access to higher education for everyone, regardless of occupation, would be a more equitable and forward-thinking investment in Missouri's workforce and economic future. Furthermore, I firmly believe that increasing the number of police officers will not stop or reduce violent crime in Missouri. Crime is often driven by systemic poverty, lack of access to quality education, and economic disparity. Pouring money into law enforcement recruitment without addressing the root causes of crime is an ineffective and short-sighted approach. If Missouri is serious about reducing crime, it should invest in community programs, education, job training, and economic opportunities rather than simply expanding the police force. Additionally, while I don't mind taxpayer dollars being used to support tuition for individuals moving to Missouri to become police officers and perhaps their spouses, I strongly oppose funding tuition for their dependent children. Providing benefits to an entire family based solely on a parent's profession is an overreach of public funding and

lacks fairness for other Missouri families who receive no such advantage. Conclusion Missouri should prioritize fairness and fiscal responsibility in allocating taxpayer-funded grants. Expanding tuition benefits to public safety personnel and their dependents without income restrictions is neither fair nor financially prudent. I urge you to oppose Bills HB 1514, HB 1525, & HB 1527 and instead consider solutions that ensure all hardworking Missouri families have equal access to higher education assistance based on need, not occupation.



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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: In-Person		SUBMIT DATE: 3/10/2025 11:56 PM
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I am Opposed to this Bill. We are Picking Winners and Losers. This is unfair to other groups like Teachers, Nurses, Pharmacists, Doctors, Dentists, Road Crews, and I could go on and on. If we are going to offer this benefit, then it should be offered to ALL Missourians.



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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: 3/10/2025 9:20 PM
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I urge you to oppose the inclusion of police officers in the tuition waiver program outlined in the Public Safety Recruitment and Retention Act. While I commend efforts to support public safety personnel, extending this benefit to law enforcement raises significant concerns about equity, fiscal responsibility, and community priorities.

- 1. Redundant Benefits:** Many police departments already offer tuition assistance programs, unlike underfunded roles such as EMTs and paramedics. Expanding this waiver duplicates existing incentives for law enforcement while diverting limited resources from personnel who lack comparable educational support.
- 2. Misallocation of Limited Funds:** The bill's success hinges on unpredictable appropriations. Prioritizing police officers—a large workforce—risks exhausting funds, leaving fewer opportunities for firefighters, EMTs, and dispatchers, who face lower wages and higher turnover. This contradicts the bill's goal of broad recruitment and retention.
- 3. Equity and Community Trust:** Police accountability remains a pressing concern. Awarding tuition waivers to law enforcement without addressing systemic issues—such as biased policing or misconduct—undermines public trust. Investments in education should prioritize professions that align with community-building and holistic public safety, such as emergency medical services.
- 4. Disproportionate Compensation:** Police officers generally receive higher salaries and benefits than EMTs, firefighters, and dispatchers. Tuition waivers for their dependents exacerbate inequities, offering additional privileges to a group already better positioned to afford education. Amend the bill to exclude police officers, focusing instead on personnel with demonstrably lower compensation and fewer existing benefits. Redirecting resources to EMTs, paramedics, and dispatchers would address critical staffing shortages while fostering equitable access to education. This bill has laudable intentions but fails to balance fiscal and social priorities. By narrowing eligibility, we can ensure it serves those most in need and aligns with community values. Thank you.