



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 516		DATE: 1/27/2025	
COMMITTEE: Special Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs			
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:	
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CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: arniedienoff@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/27/2025 11:55 PM	
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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: CHRISTEN COMMUSO		PHONE NUMBER: 314-299-1432	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: MISSOURI COALITION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT		TITLE: POLICY SPECIALIST	
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EMAIL: ccommuso@moenvironment.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/27/2025 10:56 PM	

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January 27, 2025
 Chairwoman Tricia Byrnes
 201 W. Capitol Ave., Rm. 6
 Jefferson City, Missouri
 65101

Dear Chairwoman Byrnes and Members of the Committee, Missouri Coalition for the Environment (MCE) is a statewide, advocacy nonprofit organization that works to empower Missourians to protect their environment and health. MCE has been actively involved with the communities impacted by hazardous and radioactive wastes for decades, urging legislators and state and federal agencies to find solutions to the waste problem and the related health issues. This testimony is in support of House Bill 516 with the following considerations. As you may know, beginning in the early 1940s and continuing through the late 1960s, Mallinckrodt Chemical Works of St. Louis and later St. Charles, Missouri played a pivotal role in production of the U.S. government's nuclear weapons arsenal. This production generated millions of tons of radioactive waste which now contaminates communities surrounding the two processing plants as well as interim storage areas and illegal dumping grounds in North St. Louis County. Notable areas of concern include neighborhoods along Coldwater Creek, near the West Lake Landfill — which is still experiencing an underground fire in an adjacent area of the site — and the Weldon Spring permanent storage cell and quarry. Residents near these sites are suffering from rare cancers and autoimmune diseases. We appreciate that the General Assembly is considering ways to address the environmental injustice happening in St. Louis and St. Charles. One important resource that community members seek is the ability to test water, sediment, soil, and dust. We are pleased that House Bill 516 aims to improve access to testing. MCE asks this Committee to consider the following. First, 260.558.3 states "The investigation shall be performed by applicable federal or state agencies or by a qualified contractor selected by the department through a competitive bidding process."¹ There have been circumstances in the past where testing conducted by the federal government or a company with which the federal government contracted resulted in statements contrary to third party test results.² It is important to consider the potential bias that may be present with an agency or agency contracted-entity, especially if the agency is one that is responsible for the waste's existence. Second, the Committee should consider what will occur once an investigation determines contamination at a site. Which government agency will take action to clean up the contamination? The state government cannot mandate that the federal government come in to clean up sites; there are already thousands of sites on the EPA's National Priorities List and Superfund Alternative Approach Sites.³ Consider dialogue with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP) about the Hazardous Waste Investigation Fund and a potential cooperative agreement where the state will be reimbursed for any cleanup that occurs following an investigation as FUSRAP's purpose is to clean up all Manhattan Project waste.⁴ Third, we recommend the MDNR prioritize sampling requests concerning residential drinking water and/or property. For example, Manhattan Project radioactive waste was recently discovered underneath

foundations of homes and in backyards.⁵ The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry recommends sampling includes indoor dust in homes where yards have been cleaned up or require cleanup and sediment or soil remaining in basements that were directly flooded by Coldwater Creek.⁶ Sincerely, Christen Commuso Policy Specialist Missouri Coalition for the Environment ccommuso@moenvironment.org (314) 727-0600, ext. 1161 Id.² See USACE released final report on Jana Elementary School, KSDK (May 16, 2023), <https://www.ksdk.com/article/news/special-reports/radioactive/us-army-corps-engineers-final-report-jana-elementary/63-7630eb36-cdd8-4d11-b6c3-d0816802fcce> (“The report, which focused on soil sampling conducted under the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP), stated that the immediate school ground is ‘safe from a radiological standpoint.’ . . . The Army Corps began its own testing after an independent report released in October claimed to have found high levels of radioactive contamination within and around Jana Elementary.”)³ See EPA, National Priorities List and Superfund Alternative Approach Sites, <https://www.epa.gov/superfund/search-superfund-sites-where-you-live#npl>. ⁴ See U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program, <https://www.usace.army.mil/Missions/Environmental/FUSRAP.aspx>.⁵ See Army Corps finds contamination under Florissant homes, St. Louis Post Dispatch (June 14, 2024), https://www.stltoday.com/news/local/government-politics/army-corps-finds-contamination-under-florissant-homes-but-not-at-levels-that-pose-public-threat/article_a7ee86ba-2909-11ef-bd57-f312305e8aaf.html⁶ See ATSDR Evaluation of Coldwater Creek Community Exposures, Key Findings and Recommendations, https://archive.cdc.gov/www_atsdr_cdc_gov/sites/coldwater_creek/resources.html