



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 75		DATE: 1/22/2025	
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			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: AMY DECLUE		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: aemd07@aol.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 5:36 PM	
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The government shouldn't have the right to shut down religious gatherings. It should be left up to the individual person, or organization, as to whether they want to close or participate.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ARNIE C. "HONEST-ABE" DIENOFF-STATE PUBLIC ADVOCAT		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: arniedienoff@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 11:33 PM
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I am in Support of this Bill and its intension. I believe in the Separation of Church and State that are guarded in our Federal and State Constitutions. This Bill is reasonable and just to not regulate or mandate Religious Services Venues and Programs.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: BYRON KEELIN		PHONE NUMBER: 314-402-0655	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: FREEDOM PRINCIPLE MO		TITLE: PRESIDENT	
ADDRESS: PO BOX 2			
CITY: BALLWIN		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63022
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: CATHLEEN PROTTE		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: catranhome@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:18 AM
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: JENNIFER HOUCEK		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: JENNY SPENA		PHONE NUMBER: 816-536-0398	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: FREEDOM PRINCIPLE MO		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 13305 E PRAIRIE DR			
CITY: PECULIAR		STATE: MO	ZIP: 64078
EMAIL: jennyspena@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:18 AM	

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Please support this bill to protect our religious liberty in Missouri and the autonomy and freedom of each church to meet as they so desire without interference from the government.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MRS. AMY HOWDESHELL		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: howdymomma7@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:37 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

I am in favor of HB 75, the Missouri Religious Freedom Protection Act. During the pandemic, churches should not have been shut down. Closing churches while allowing stores to be open is outrageous. The pandemic left a lasting negative effect on church attendance. We have to protect the freedom to worship. I have been attending my church every weekend for my entire adult life and the government should not be interfering with that.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SANDY KARNES		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: sandyj325@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 9:31 AM

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I am in favor of HB75, Missouri Religious Freedom Protection Act, as no man should stop what God himself states in the Bible about gathering. Hebrews 10:25, Act 2:46, and etc. During the pandemic when the world was at chaos and so many people were losing loved ones, we needed to be able to gather. It was okay to go to the liquor store but not to church. That was wrong in so many ways. Never should man stop the gathering of people wanting to worship and pray to God. Please pass HB75.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: TIMOTHY FABER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:		SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME		
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: BRIAN KAYLOR		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: WORD&WAY		TITLE: EDITOR & PRESIDENT
ADDRESS:		
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65109
EMAIL: bkaylor@wordandway.org	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 11:27 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

This bill would unnecessarily tie the hands of public health officials. As points 6 & 7 in the bill show, there are good reasons for public officials to impose safety/health restrictions on houses of worship. That same approach should expand to other health issues. There should not be a pandemic privilege for religion.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: CYNTHIA HOLMES		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: officecsh@aol.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 9:54 AM
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As a leader of a religious denomination I believe that Churches should not receive special treatment when it comes to serious public health threats. We should be the first to champion measures that may save lives just as we recognize our obligation to follow fire safety measures.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: DANIELLE MEERT		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: danielle.meert@gmail.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 6:23 PM
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: EMILY HORNSTRA		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: emlife@att.net		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 5:55 PM
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: GERALYN MADIGAN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: gmadigan@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 9:17 PM
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What is the purpose of this bill? To prevent church services from being halted to prevent the spread of a deadly communicable disease, like Covid? God forbid we want to prevent needless disease spread and deaths, which overwhelmed our hospitals. I oppose this bill and the needless time spent on it. Please focus on real issues that can actually help Missourians, like improving Missouri's abysmal maternal-child mortality rate or improving teacher pay. Missouri ranks near the bottom of all states in both of these. Certainly more pressing issues.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: HAROLD H. HARRIS		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: hal.h.harris@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 11:35 AM
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This "short and simple" bill, written with the best of intentions to prevent government "interference" with religious gatherings, would prevent the protection of science to religious believers. I am confident that it was introduced because of experiences during the recent COVID-10 pandemic, but the next pandemic (and there certainly will be one), may be completely different in its method of contagion, and require a different strategy for its interruption. By completely eliminating the possibility that the protection of the population might require suspension of public gatherings, this measure would help to assure that religious believers might be the first and most likely victims, but also endanger Missourians at large from the consequences of contagion. As a scientist (Ph.D., Emeritus Professor of Chemistry), I see this bill as a renunciation of the science of biology and the spread of disease.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: IAN K. HORNSTRA		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: ianhornstra@msn.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 5:57 PM
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: LAURA BURKHARDT		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: aplomb-grove0n@icloud.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 8:35 PM

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I'm opposed to big government stepping in and taking away local control. Because of that, I strongly oppose this bill.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: MICHAEL		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: libertytree.cottage976@passinbox.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 3:55 PM

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I only oppose subsection 6 of this bill: _____ "6. The provisions of subsections 3 and 4 of this section shall not apply to temporary emergency evacuation orders involving imminent danger from flooding, fires, tornadoes, earthquakes, or hazardous material incidents, that apply specifically to the area where the place of worship or the residences of its members are located. Once the imminent danger has passed, religious services shall be allowed to resume." _____ My concern is that the exception for "hazardous material incidents" could likely be exploited by the intentional creation of a hazardous material incident to justify the issuance of a temporary evacuation order for the purpose of prohibiting a group of people assembling for religious purposes. _____ Example: A government entity wants to temporarily ban religious gatherings due to a viral pandemic (think back to Covid-19). The government entity could declare such a pandemic as a "hazardous material incident", or fabricate a "hazardous material incident" soely for the purpose of temporarily banning a religious gathering at a house of worship. _____ The term "hazardous material incident" needs to be very narrowly and clearly defined.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: MICKEY DOLLENS		PHONE NUMBER: 608-256-8900	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: FREEDOM FROM RELIGION FOUNDATION		TITLE: REGIONAL GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS MANAGER	
ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 750, MADISON, WI 53701			
CITY: MADISON		STATE: WI	ZIP: 53701
EMAIL: dollensm@ffrf.org	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2025 8:08 PM
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Re: Testimony in Opposition to House Bill 75 – Missouri Religious Freedom Protection Act

Dear Committee Chair and Members of the Emerging Issues Committee, I am writing on behalf of the FFRF Action Fund (FFRF AF) to express our strong opposition to House Bill 75. FFRF AF is an affiliate of the Freedom From Religion Foundation, a national nonprofit organization with over 40,000 members across the country, including nearly 500 members in Missouri. Our mission is to ensure that laws remain secular, preserving the constitutional principle of separating state and church. House Bill 75 prohibits public officials from issuing orders that “have the effect” of limiting or prohibiting religious services, worship, or congregation. Additionally, it bars public officials from restricting religious groups from meeting, granting them a privilege that no other groups are afforded. In essence, this bill enables religious groups to disregard lawful, neutral restrictions intended to protect public safety—restrictions applied equally to all others. Missouri’s state constitutional provisions “declaring that there shall be a separation of church and state are not only more explicit but more restrictive” than the First Amendment, as affirmed in case law. Even the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in *Trinity Lutheran Church of Columbia, Mo., Inc. v. Comer* did not alter this principle. Accordingly, any additional rights that Missouri grants to religious organizations beyond what is federally protected are subject to a higher level of scrutiny under the Missouri Constitution. HB 75 is also riddled with vague language that invites confusion and costly litigation. Terms such as “imminent danger” and “has the effect of limiting” are unclear and subjective. For example: Public Health Orders: Religious groups could evade common-sense health restrictions by simply claiming a religious exemption, making it difficult to enforce public health protections during crises like pandemics. Infrastructure Issues: Would boil orders violate this law by limiting water use during religious gatherings? Could roadblocks near places of worship during emergencies be interpreted as a violation? These ambiguities open the door to challenges that may undermine the very governance this legislation seeks to protect. HB 75 effectively privileges religious groups over non-religious groups, allowing them to bypass neutral public safety orders. Such exemptions erode the principle of equal treatment under the law, leading to potential constitutional conflicts and creating unnecessary divisions within communities. For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to reject House Bill 75. Instead, I encourage the committee to consider balanced solutions that protect religious freedoms while ensuring public safety and the government’s ability to act in the best interest of all Missourians during emergencies. Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration of these concerns. Any questions can be directed to me. Sincerely, Mickey Dollens
Regional Government Affairs Manager
Freedom From Religion Foundation



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: NADINE BALL		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: 19ball.nadine58@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 9:21 AM
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article 1 of the Missouri Constitution Bill of Rights, Sections 5, 6, and 7 already address the content of this bill. This leads me to suspect that it is submitted for performative purposes or to claim more rights than Missouri allows. Do not waste taxpayer time or money on this bill. Further, I wonder if Rep Loy would be happy with the meeting of the county Pagan society in her offices—as permitted by this bill. Religious freedom is already protected in our state.



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WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: SAGE CORAM		PHONE NUMBER: 314-669-3425
REPRESENTING: AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION OF MISSOURI		TITLE:
ADDRESS: 906 OLIVE ST., #1130		
CITY: ST. LOUIS		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 63101
EMAIL: scoram@aclu-mo.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 10:46 PM

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The American Civil Liberties Union of Missouri strives to safeguard the First Amendment's guarantee of religious liberty. Missourians have both the right to religious belief and expression and the guarantee that the government will not favor particular faiths over others or prefer religion over non-religion. While HB 75 includes carve outs for imminent danger due to weather emergencies, the language prohibiting orders that have "that effect of limiting or prohibiting" places of worship or religious groups from holding services and meetings is too broad. This proposed bill could impede the government's ability to respond effectively to future pandemics or other public-health threats that endanger the lives of Missourians. As such, the ACLU of Missouri opposes HB 75 and urges you to vote no on this bill.



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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: 1/21/2025 7:41 PM
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This act could put people of faith at serious risk in a public health emergency. Please oppose this nonsense.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: SUZANNE MCGINNIS		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: suzmas4@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 1/22/2025 1:48 PM
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If large gatherings are closed due to a pandemic or other issue of public safety, all large gatherings should be included. Exemptions can be a slippery slope. For this reason I am opposed. The sacrament can be done over Zoom as our church did. Sure it's not the same, but it can be done. There is great irony in the group wanting freedom, loves taking it away from others.