



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 90		DATE: 3/26/2025	
COMMITTEE: Higher Education and Workforce Development			
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. AC "HONEST-ABE" DIENOFF-STATE PUBLIC ADVO		PHONE NUMBER:	
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CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:		SUBMIT DATE: 3/26/2025 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME: CHRISTIAN DANG		PHONE NUMBER:	
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I would encourage more public universities to offer more graduate programs + degrees currently restricted to the UMSYSTEM. I attend a grad program out of state due to better options + offers; Missouri should embrace moving from these restrictions that are not so common in other states.



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WITNESS NAME: DANIEL GRIFFIN		PHONE NUMBER:	
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WITNESS NAME			
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WITNESS NAME: GARRETT GRIFFIN		PHONE NUMBER:	
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I am a current master's student in American history at Missouri State University. If I ever decide to get my PhD, I would want to get it at Missouri State. But that is against the law! It is baffling to me that nine public universities are banned from offering PhDs and other doctorates. I support HB 90 and HB 616 because I believe in free choice. I believe in treating all public universities in this state equally. I oppose monopoly and holding some schools back to give the UM system a leg up. The Senate Education committee just passed the Senate version of these bills with a bipartisan vote of 5-2. In 2024, the bill passed 8-2. This is such common sense that most everyone can agree on it. Only those enjoying a monopoly and special privileges would oppose this, by putting forth fictions about spiraling costs. (As the Fiscal Note on these bills indicates, these concerns are unfounded. Which makes sense considering that the Coordinating Board still exists to manage programs and costs; it is simply right to allow the nine disadvantaged schools to propose programs to the Board like the UM System can.) I urge you to vote YES to stand up for competition, fairness, and keeping more potential doctoral students in the state.



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WITNESS NAME			
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WITNESS NAME: JOHN M. HUTCHINSON		PHONE NUMBER:	
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WITNESS NAME: MATTHEW K O'HARA		PHONE NUMBER:	
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Support the whole state!			



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WITNESS NAME: PETER HERSCEND		PHONE NUMBER:	
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WITNESS NAME: TOM STRONG		PHONE NUMBER:	
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Mr. Chair, members of the Committee, good afternoon, and thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Carson Howe. I am a senior, graduating in May, from the University of Missouri St. Louis-I am a double major in Political Science and Public Policy Administration, and I am the Co-Legislative Director for the Associated Students of the University of Missouri (ASUM). We are a nonpartisan, independent student organization representing the well over 70,000 students of the University of Missouri. We are testifying in opposition to the bill because we are deeply concerned about its impact on our tuition and the quality of our existing programs. As an UMSL student, I see the investments made across the UM System to support students. The UM System connects students to internships, research positions, and networking opportunities that shape our futures. It equips us with the tools to succeed, not just in the classroom, but in our lifelong careers. All over the UM System, I have peers who have secured internships with Fortune 500 companies, conducted groundbreaking research, and built relationships that will advance their careers long after they graduate. But I also see some of the challenges firsthand. The primary challenge, as always, is money, these investments aren't cheap. These programs we have need a lot of money, and years to develop. The students I know who are in doctoral programs are receiving a waiver for some or all their tuition so they can support research and teaching. And these existing programs are already facing challenges. Just at UMSL, PhD enrollment has decreased by over 50% over the last decade. Add this to even more problems facing higher ed. as a whole, such as the projected decreases in the number of high school graduates, and the uncertainty around state and federal funding. These problems alone make offering doctoral programs harder. But to add an additional challenge in allowing similar programs to be created at every public college or university in our state? This makes me, and my peers on all 4 of our campuses terrified about what this bill will do to our current programs, teachers, and fellow students. The question on so many students' minds is: Who is going to pay for SB 11? One answer is to pass the cost on to taxpayers by dramatically increasing funding for higher ed. Another is to pass it on to us directly, through tuition increases. And the third is to water down or lose existing programs, which means students lose out on the opportunities they paid for. A situation in which students could look elsewhere to find those same opportunities. Missouri already faces a severe brain drain, and this legislation could accelerate that loss. Members of the committee, I don't want to see that happen to the state and communities I love. While starting a bunch of new programs sounds nice, I hope you'll consider the unintended consequences for students and taxpayers. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill and for supporting Missouri students. I am happy to answer any questions.



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WITNESS NAME			
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WITNESS NAME: CHARLES (CHUCK) BRAZEALE		PHONE NUMBER:	
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WITNESS NAME: CHRISTOPHER WALLACE		PHONE NUMBER:	
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My name is Christopher Wallace, and I presently reside in Maryville, Missouri. I am providing written testimony in opposition to HB 90 and HB 616. By way of further introduction, I hold a MS and PhD in Nuclear Engineering from the University of Missouri – Columbia. The program I graduated from was world class. The year I graduated (1985) it was rated the #7 nuclear engineering graduate program in the United States and two years later it had moved up the rankings to #5. It stayed at that level for several years. It took the MU System the better part of 20 years to achieve that peer recognized level of consistent performance (~ 1968 – 1985). Nationally competitive research PhD programs are not created overnight. Let me reinforce this with a couple of items: 1. MU funded research for 2024 totaled ~ \$651M; Missouri State ~ \$12M. 2. In 2005, Southwest Missouri State University (SMS) made a request to change their name to Missouri State University. As part of the agreement with the Missouri legislature and the UM System, SMS agreed to the following conditions: Missouri State University would not seek to become a Research University; Missouri State University would not offer doctoral and professional degrees. 3. In response to MSU's efforts to offer doctoral programs in violation of the 2005 agreement, HB 1465 was passed by the Missouri Legislature in 2018 and signed into law. This law allows 4-year universities to offer doctoral and professional degrees in partnership with the UM System. My understanding is if the UM System declines to partner on a specific program, 4-year universities can move forward with a specific doctoral and/or professional degree program. 4. Subsequently, the UM System has 8-degree programs in partnership with 4-year institutions. Five of the eight are with Missouri State University. 5. Per capita higher education funding in 2025 for Missouri is \$213.00. We only rank ahead of New Hampshire, Washington DC, Arizona, Pennsylvania, and Vermont. Our nearest SEC peer is Oklahoma at \$284.00. The essence of a good graduate research PhD program is the ability to effectively win competitions for research funding against the Cal Tech's, UCLA's, MIT's, and Michigan's of the world – and then turn that research into technology that benefits your citizens and creates economic opportunity for your state. At the time I went through our MU program, the acceptance rate for MS applicants was ~ 20%, while the Ph.D. program rejected ~ 95% of those who attempted it. If you made it through both wickets and successfully graduated, you should be able to effectively compete and win against anybody. After graduation I had no trouble competing. I spent more than 25 years in the defense and intelligence business. That included time in the private sector as well as time as a Special Government Employee with Senior Executive Service rank, serving across administrations of both political parties. Prior to retirement I was asked, and privileged, to serve on the: Army Science Board (works for the VCSUSA and AUSA RDT&E), the Naval Research Advisory Committee (works for ASN RDT&E), the DARPA Senior Review Board (works for Sec Def and JCS), the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, Threat Reduction Advisory Council Science and Technology Panel (works for DTRA Director and JCS), and Sandia National Laboratory's National Security Advisory Panel. I also served as the first Chief Scientist

of the US Army's Asymmetric Warfare Group. I was able to observe research engineering graduate programs from multiple perspectives: as a source of employees and potential business partners from the private sector side; and, as a potential source of good research ideas that should be funded, and supported, from the government side. I also had a chance to do a little public and private university advisory work. So, what are some of the lessons learned that I think about when considering this prospective legislation: 1.) The AAU Public Land Grant Universities produced better graduates, better technologies, and better partner program performance than many famous private universities. The Land Grant Extension mission imbued culture sharpened their focus on moving quickly from research result to citizen benefit. So, for example, when I brought Department of Energy National Laboratory colleagues with me to see what research could be rapidly transitioned to the warfighter, the AAU Land Grants were all over that goal – the private universities not so much. 2.) Federal funding agencies could be likely to interpret these proposed bills (if passed) as breaking Missouri's commitment to the land grant mission and we might be violating Federal law (Morrill Act and Smith-Lever Act) by spreading the public graduate research PhD programs to the regional universities. This could place USDA and NIFA support at risk. The AAU would also likely view this in an unsympathetic light – could place MU's AAU status at risk and place Federal support for NEXT GEN and MURR 2 at risk. 3.) You as legislators, will need to spend far more money, and it will take more time, than you envision right now to get the regional universities to the point where the Federal Government or private entities will consider them to be competitive research institutions on par with what already exists within the MU System. The current disparity in research awards between MU and MSU tells you that more qualified research faculty will need to be hired at the regional universities – if the existing regional university faculty could be as competitive as MU, they would have already done it by making use of the HB 1465 provisions already existing within Missouri law. They have not done so. Also, the Federal government and appropriate accrediting agencies will likely view many of the existing faculty and school directors as not credible when it comes to research PhD student preparation and supervision (no good existing research track record). Regional university school directors with terminal MS degrees will need to be replaced if those schools are to now offer research PhD degrees. Hiring the faculty to do this will require salary schedule increases along with regional university budget increases to hire individuals with acceptable demonstrated capabilities. Consequently, the regional universities will be competing with the AAU Public Land Grants and AAU private universities in our area for faculty talent. Once hired, those new faculty will not be creating newly minted PhD graduates overnight – it will take 4 to 6 years before the first cohort graduates and on the order of 10 – 20 years for the programs to climb into the top ten. We just don't have the tax base and the time to successfully pull off the transition of regional universities to full on public research universities. This is a bad idea for the state of Missouri.



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