



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
**WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM**

BILL NUMBER: <b>HB 945</b>		DATE: <b>2/11/2025</b>	
COMMITTEE: <b>Children and Families</b>			
<b>TESTIFYING:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>ALEXA DUDLEY</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/11/2025 12:00 AM</b>	
<b>THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.</b>			



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>ARNIE C. "HONEST-ABE" DIENOFF-STATE PUBLIC ADVOCATE</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE:      ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>arniedienoff@yahoo.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>In-Person</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/11/2025 10:59 PM</b>
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**I am in Support of this Bill and its intension. All Fostered Youth are to afforded the basic rRights and Appeals throughout the process and placement of the youth. I Support the "Foster Bill of Rights."**



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>CARA LANTZ</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>cara_lantz@hotmail.com</b>		ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2025 9:19 PM</b>
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I support the changes to the bill. I recommend adding that Foster Parents or Kinship parents have the right to legal representation in dependency and neglect cases. In addition, to allow Foster Parents and Kinship Parents represent their interests and be present during court proceedings to ensure that foster parents have a voice in decisions affecting the children in their care.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>JOANNE SCHRADER</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE:                  ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>crazyhorse1876@gmail.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/9/2025 11:56 PM</b>
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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>RACHEL RENAE BEUSHAUSEN</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>rachel.beushausen@gmail.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2025 9:17 PM</b>	

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As a foster parent of 10 years, I can testify to the need to protect our children. I take teens, so I can speak in recognition of them. We have system in place that removes children/teens from those they know and love - even, when they have endured incredible trauma. It's all they've known. They don't trust people. They won't speak up for fear of retribution by adults. This is what they know. This is what they have lived. The people that they should be able to trust the most in the world have hurt them, have allowed them to be hurt, they have not protected them. It's our job to go one step further and make sure that the system itself is protecting them. They need to be able to speak up when they feel they aren't being represented fairly or justly by their foster parent, JO, GAL, Caseworker, whomever it may be, without fear of repercussions. They need to know that they will be heard. . They need the ability to speak to a case worker or GAL alone if they want or need to. It's our job to put their safety, security and stability first. We need our system to be consistent across the board in all counties, in all offices, in Missouri. There is so much inconsistency between CD/DSS/GAL/JO offices in how things are handled. Let this be a start of consistent practices state wide to protect the most vulnerable. Make Missouri the stand out state in the protection of our children and teens. We fall below average in so many areas with our foster system. Let this be the start of a better Missouri foster system.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>RONNIE L WHITE</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>veteran7395@gmail.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/11/2025 11:26 AM</b>

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I am writing to express my strong support for HB 945, the Protection of Children Act, sponsored by Representative Gragg. Along with my wife, I am a former foster parent. I have witnessed firsthand both the challenges and the profound impact that a stable, supportive environment can have on children in state custody. This bill is a vital step toward strengthening the rights of foster youth and ensuring that caregivers, including foster and kinship parents, receive the respect and support they need to provide the best possible care. HB 945 reinforces the Foster Youth Bill of Rights, ensuring that children in state custody have essential protections, including: The right to live in a safe, stable, and nurturing environment. The right to maintain family connections, including visits with siblings and relatives. The right to educational continuity, reducing unnecessary school disruptions. The right to be informed of and participate in court proceedings affecting their future. The right to privately communicate with case managers, attorneys, and advocates. Additionally, the bill strengthens the Foster Parents' Bill of Rights by recognizing kinship foster parents—grandparents, relatives, or close family friends who step in to provide a safe and loving home. As a former foster parent, I know how critical it is that caregivers are treated fairly and not subjected to discrimination when working with the Children's Division and its contractors. This legislation ensures that kinship foster parents are afforded the same rights and considerations as traditional foster parents. HB 945 also mandates timely and individualized permanency and case plans, ensuring that foster children are not left in limbo without a clear path forward. These measures will help reduce placement instability and provide foster youth with the security and guidance they need to transition successfully into adulthood. Missouri's foster children deserve to be protected, heard, and supported. As someone who has opened my home to foster children, I have seen the difference a well-structured, compassionate system can make in their lives. By passing HB 945, we take a necessary step toward ensuring that every child in the foster care system has the opportunity to grow up in a safe and loving environment. I urge this committee to support HB 945 and help improve the foster care system for the children and families it serves. I appreciate your consideration.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>TERESA PACE</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>teresapaceu@gmail.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>		SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2025 11:19 AM</b>
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The concern and responsibility of a foster worker could be crucial to a child's well-being and the future of our state and country, vast improvements to support Missouri foster care are necessary.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>REGISTERED LOBBYIST:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>LISA PANNETT</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
REPRESENTING: <b>ARMORVINE</b>		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: <b>MO</b>
EMAIL:		ZIP:
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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>REGISTERED LOBBYIST:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>MARCIA HAZELHORST</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>573-616-1058</b>	
REPRESENTING: <b>MISSOURI JUVENILE JUSTICE ASSOCIATION</b>		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: <b>308 E HIGH ST</b>			
CITY: <b>JEFFERSON CITY</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>65102</b>
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/11/2025 12:00 AM</b>	
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