



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 1655		DATE: 1/21/2026	
COMMITTEE: Pensions			
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: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 1/21/2026 11:56 PM	
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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: JASON HOY		PHONE NUMBER: 816-482-8157	
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Chair and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this statement for the record regarding the proposed language in Section 105.695 and its potential implications for public pension systems in the State of Missouri, including the Kansas City Police Employees’ Retirement System (KCPERS).

Public pension systems are fiduciary institutions established to provide retirement security for public servants while safeguarding the long-term financial integrity of the plans they administer. In that capacity, pension systems must be able to monitor, evaluate, and communicate the impacts of policy changes that directly affect funding, benefits, and sustainability. The proposed language in Section 105.695 raises several concerns that merit careful consideration.

First, the proposed restrictions could materially limit a retirement system’s ability to engage in advocacy related to its core operations and sustainability. Pension systems routinely provide analysis and perspective on proposals that affect contribution rates, funding policy, plan design, or governance. Prohibiting the use of system resources to advocate for or against ballot measures could prevent a system from responding to initiatives that would reduce employer contributions, alter benefit structures, or otherwise impair actuarial soundness. In such cases, silence is not neutrality; it exposes the system to material financial risk without the ability to respond.

Second, the language may unintentionally inhibit stakeholder education. Pension systems have a responsibility to educate members, retirees, policymakers, and the public about proposals that directly affect retirement benefits and system funding. Under the proposed provision, even factual explanations of the financial and economic consequences of a ballot initiative could be interpreted as advocacy. This creates a risk that decisions with long-term fiscal implications could be made without clear, accurate, and system-specific information being available to those most affected.

Third, the proposal introduces operational uncertainty. The prohibition on using system funds to pay for debts or obligations raises questions about whether pension systems could retain consultants, actuaries, or legal counsel to analyze or respond to ballot measures or legislation with significant consequences. If a measure affecting funding or benefits were to pass, systems could face challenges engaging necessary expertise to address compliance, legal exposure, or implementation issues.

Fourth, the breadth of the terms “advocate, support, or oppose” creates ambiguity that may invite legal

disputes. Routine fiduciary activities such as issuing impact analyses, publishing financial projections, or responding to inquiries could be challenged as impermissible advocacy. The resulting risk of litigation or enforcement actions would divert system resources away from their primary purpose: paying promised benefits.

Finally, these limitations risk undermining the fiduciary obligation pension systems owe to their members and retirees. Trustees and staff are legally required to act solely in the interest of plan participants. Restrictions that prevent systems from opposing measures that would reduce benefits, increase member costs, or weaken funding directly conflict with that duty and may ultimately result in adverse outcomes for retirees and active employees.

In summary, Section 105.695, as currently drafted, significantly constrains public pension systems' ability to fulfill their fiduciary responsibilities, educate stakeholders, and protect long-term sustainability. Clarifying the scope of permissible activities, or providing explicit exceptions for advocacy and education directly related to system funding, governance, and member benefits, would help mitigate these risks while preserving legislative intent.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued attention to the retirement security of Missouri's public servants.

Respectfully submitted,
Jason Hoy
Executive Director
Kansas City Police Employees' Retirement System (KCPERS)



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WITNESS NAME			
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HB 1655 is framed as a technical adjustment to public employee retirement administration, but in practice it shifts risk and responsibility away from the retirement system and onto individual retirees, even when errors originate with the system itself.

The bill authorizes recovery of overpayments without establishing meaningful hardship protections, fault standards, or due-process safeguards for beneficiaries.

Public employees who planned their retirement in good faith should not be financially penalized for administrative mistakes beyond their control.

Additionally, the selective reopening of lump-sum election opportunities benefits a narrow subset of members while doing nothing to address broader retirement insecurity among rank-and-file public workers.

Finally, while the bill restricts pension funds from engaging in political or ballot advocacy, it leaves untouched the legislature’s ability to alter retirement systems without corresponding input from affected workers.

This creates an imbalance of power, not transparency.

Public servants deserve retirement systems built on fairness, accountability, and trust — not retroactive clawbacks and institutional self-protection.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to reject HB 1655.



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WITNESS NAME			
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