



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 1770		DATE: 2/24/2026
COMMITTEE: Children and Families		
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: ALLEN COGGINS		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2026 7:21 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Committee members HB1770 is vital to help justice be served for the children who do not currently have a voice. I came to find this issue the hard way, our granddaughter was being abused at the age of 2. Had my wife and I not seen the burns, bruises and black eyes. Our princess would not be here today. She would of had to tell about the abuse before she started school. The fear we witnessed in her first hand, I belive there is no child who is being continually abused would ever tell due to the fear alone. There is a gap in protection for Missouri's most precious resource and that is our children. I urge you all to please pass this and close the gap on our most vulnerable.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: ARNIE C. A.C. "HONEST ABE" DIENOFF		PHONE NUMBER: 314-440-9000	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: MISSOURI STATE PUBLIC ADVOCACY		TITLE: STATE PUBLIC ADVOCATE	
ADDRESS: PO BOX 1535			
CITY: O'FALLON		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63366
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2026 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: EDWARD C. HERWIG JR		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 2/23/2026 7:42 PM

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As an investigator for crimes against children, for the last 10 years, I have gotten into many investigations where children have not been able to get justice because of such a limited statute of limitations. In one case in particular, I was able to prove 10 years of Child Abuse, but we were only able to charge a small fraction of those instances because of the limitations. It is also an unrealistic expectation for children who have been born into abusive household to even know what they are experiencing is wrong.

I understand some people would have an aversion to this, but in our court of law, it still must be proven beyond a reasonable doubt. Therefore, just because a child makes a statement does not make it fact. We should at least give children the opportunity to get justice for the wrongdoing is done to them by expanding the statute of limitation we give investigators the opportunity to seek justice for these children.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: JENNIFER COGGINS		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/23/2026 4:46 PM	
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Testimony in Support of HB1770 (2026)
 "Time to Tell"

Chairman and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jennifer Coggins. I am here as a mother and a grandmother.

My daughter, — my biological granddaughter who is now my adopted daughter — was abused at two years old by her biological mother and her mother's boyfriend.

Two years old.

At two, a child does not understand abuse. She does not understand betrayal. She does not have language for violation. She only feels fear. Pain. Confusion.

In Missouri, the current statute of limitations for this crime is three years.

Three years.

The clock on justice begins ticking when a child is first abused.

In my daughter's case, we saw the signs. We intervened. We fought for her. We got her safe.

But without us, the legal time to hold her abusers accountable could have expired while she was still learning her colors and counting to ten, before she even entered kindergarten.

If she was able to survive that long.

Many children are unable to speak about abuse/trauma. Trauma rewires the brain. Fear keeps them silent. Abusers often control the very environment the child depends on to survive. Expecting a toddler, a young child, or even a teenager — to disclose abuse within a narrow legal window ignores the reality of trauma.

The law should not protect perpetrators simply because a victimized child needed time.

**HB1770 is about something simple and profoundly fair:
Time to Tell.**

**Time to grow.
Time to understand.
Time to find safety.
Time to find their voice.**

Extending the statute of limitations does not eliminate due process. It does not presume guilt. It simply ensures that justice is not denied before a child has the developmental capacity to ask for it.

**Justice should not expire before memory can be processed.
Justice should not expire before healing even begins.**

Please pass HB1770.

Give abused children in Missouri the time they need to tell the truth about what was done to them — and the opportunity to seek justice when they are finally strong enough to stand in a room like this and speak.

Thank you.



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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: JESSICA PETRIE		PHONE NUMBER: 573-635-6092	
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI NETWORK AGAINST CHILD ABUSE		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: PO BOX 1805			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65102
EMAIL: jessica@wintonpolicygroup.com	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2026 9:49 AM	
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: EMILY STOINSKI		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/23/2026 9:36 PM
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My name is Emily Stoinski, and I am a registered Missouri voter. I am writing today in opposition to HB 1770. As someone who has spent the past near decade as a vocal advocate for abusive survivors, I know that it often takes a lot of time for survivors of child abuse to come forward. Limits like this are not reflective of the time it takes for survivors to come forward and seek justice support.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: SARAH BERRY		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/24/2026 8:27 AM	

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HB 1770 extends the statute of limitations for child abuse and neglect prosecutions to ten years after the victim turns eighteen. While protecting children is paramount, the bill lacks clarity regarding prospective application and risks unconstitutional retroactive enforcement if applied to already time-barred offenses.

The measure also applies uniformly across varying degrees of conduct under §568.060, without tailoring based on severity. Statutes of limitation exist to ensure reliable prosecution and protect due process when evidence grows stale.

If the General Assembly intends to extend limitations periods, it should do so with precise prospective language and calibrated offense distinctions to avoid constitutional infirmity.

Legislative Notice:

The General Assembly is placed on notice that retroactive application of extended criminal statutes of limitation to revive previously time-barred offenses would violate the Ex Post Facto Clauses of the United States and Missouri Constitutions. Absent clear prospective limitation language, this bill may invite facial or as-applied constitutional challenges.