



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 1772		DATE: 2/3/2026
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: JOANNE SCHRADER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/1/2026 11:23 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

As an adoptee, I support legislation that enhances the process of making adoption more affordable and available. As long as everyone is properly vetted, no child should linger longer than necessary without a family.



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WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: MADISON EACRET		PHONE NUMBER: 314-882-1007
REPRESENTING: FOSTERADOPT CONNECT		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY: INDEPENDENCE		STATE: MO
		ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/3/2026 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: TIMOTHY FABER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/2/2026 10:51 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

If we are going to truly be pro-life, we must provide for the children after they are born, doing all we can to make sure they are raised by a loving family and not by the state or some other child care organization.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ARNIE C. DIENOFF-STATE PUBLIC ADVOCATE		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 2/3/2026 1:11 AM	

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**I am Opposed to this Bill and yet more Government Giveaways in expanding Programs and Services.
Our State NEEDS to cut over \$2-Billion Dollars from our State's Annual Budget.**



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: KORTNIE HUDDLESTON		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/3/2026 11:36 PM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

I oppose this bill because it fundamentally fails to center the lifelong needs and trauma of the adopted child. All adoption begins with profound loss—the severing of a child’s first family. This bill’s mechanisms will compound that trauma.

The provision to suspend subsidies if a child is removed from an adoptive home (Section 2) is catastrophic. It prioritizes fiscal punishment over a child’s safety and stability. When an adoption disrupts, the child re-experiences primal rejection and abandonment. At this moment of extreme crisis, the state proposes to cut the very resources for therapy, specialized care, and stability the child desperately needs. It tells a traumatized child, "Your support disappears when your family fails you." This is state-sanctioned re-abandonment.

Furthermore, the bill’s framework treats adoption as a simple, finite transaction. The paltry cap on legal fee assistance reveals a mindset that once the papers are signed, the child’s need for significant financial investment ends. This is false. Adoptees, especially those from foster care, require lifelong access to mental healthcare, cultural connection, and often services for disabilities stemming from prenatal trauma or neglect. By failing to mandate robust, permanent support tied to the child’s needs—not the adoptive parents' legal status—the state guarantees that the most vulnerable adoptees will be left without resources as adults.

This legislation views children as liabilities to be managed, not as whole human beings with a right to ongoing care and connection. It builds a system where financial support is conditional and precarious, mirroring the conditional love and security many adoptees already fear.

I urge you to reject this punitive framework. Support policies that provide permanent, non-disruptable subsidies tied to the child, fund lifelong mental health services for adoptees, and prioritize ethical practices that center an adoptee’s right to identity, heritage, and continuous support.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: MICHAEL DREYER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/3/2026 11:36 PM	

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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: 2/1/2026 7:08 PM	

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HB 1772 improperly converts a child-centered adoption subsidy program into a state-funded reimbursement mechanism for private legal services, fundamentally distorting the purpose of Missouri’s adoption subsidy framework.

Adoption subsidies exist to meet the ongoing needs of children, not to underwrite attorney fees after a court proceeding has concluded.

By authorizing public funds to pay for legal expenses only upon successful completion of an adoption, this bill incentivizes outcome-based reimbursement rather than child welfare stability.

It shifts state resources away from post-adoption support—where disruptions, trauma, and long-term care needs actually emerge—and toward transactional legal costs that primarily benefit adults and the private bar.

HB 1772 also raises serious equity and access concerns. Conditioning reimbursement on “successful” adoption proceedings disadvantages lower-income families who cannot front thousands of dollars in legal fees, effectively privileging those with existing financial means.

Adoption policy should lower barriers to permanency, not reward families who can afford to carry costs upfront.

Additionally, the bill embeds rigid fee caps, hourly rates, and litigation classifications directly into statute—an inappropriate legislative intrusion into judicial administration and legal practice regulation.

These matters are traditionally governed by courts and professional standards, not fixed by statute in a child welfare code.

Most concerning, HB 1772 blurs the line between child protection policy and litigation finance without any demonstrated fiscal analysis, safeguards against cost inflation, or assurance that redirected funds will not reduce services for children with complex medical, psychological, or developmental needs.

Missouri should be strengthening adoption stability and post-placement support—not reallocating scarce child welfare funds to reimburse legal proceedings after the fact.

For these reasons, HB 1772 should be rejected.

Footnote:

See *Smith v. Organization of Foster Families*, 431 U.S. 816 (1977) (recognizing the state's heightened responsibility to structure child welfare systems around the best interests and ongoing needs of the child, not administrative or adult convenience).

Legislative schemes that redirect child welfare funding toward non-child-specific expenditures risk undermining the constitutional and statutory purpose of foster care and adoption programs.