



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 1788		DATE: 1/13/2026	
COMMITTEE: Elections			
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		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/13/2026 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: JESSE CHILCUTT		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:25 PM
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Hello, I'm testifying in support of both HB1788 and HB1871 as Missouri's democratic system is fundamentally broken and too often designed around benefiting the wealthy, powerful, and influential while disempowering the population of everyday working people. This will massively make campaign funding more grassroots and rely more heavily on small dollar donations, which come from regular everyday people. As well make campaign funding more transparent so that superpacs or ultra wealthy donors can't just sweep an election with their overwhelming funds. I believe this will massively change our democratic systems of Missouri, and make our state live more greatly up to the ideals of "a system by and for the people". Thank you.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: REBECCA KROLL		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 10:22 PM
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Chair and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 1788.

I am testifying today as a Missouri voter who cares about fairness and transparency in our elections.

I support HB 1788 because it helps make campaign funding clearer and more accountable. Voters should be able to understand who is funding campaigns and where political money is coming from. This bill takes reasonable steps to limit large cash donations and reduce anonymous contributions, which helps build trust in the election process.

I also appreciate that the bill requires campaigns to clearly state who will benefit from a donation. That kind of transparency protects both voters and donors and helps prevent confusion.

While campaigns need to raise money to operate, those funds should be handled in a way that is open and easy for the public to understand. HB 1788 moves Missouri in a positive direction by strengthening disclosure and accountability.

For these reasons, I support HB 1788 and encourage the committee to advance it.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: SHERRY L BUCHANAN		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 2:42 PM	
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This looks like a good idea to prevent campaign dishonesty.



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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: 1/12/2026 10:11 PM

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I submit this testimony in opposition to HB?1788, which proposes changes to Missouri’s campaign finance laws by amending §130.031, RSMo. While transparency in campaign contributions is vital, this bill introduces provisions that create loopholes, restrict meaningful oversight, and could undermine public trust in elections.

Key Concerns

Anonymous Contribution Loopholes (Sections 4–6)

The bill allows aggregate anonymous contributions up to \$500 or 1% of total contributions, whichever is greater.

It exempts funds from fundraising events under certain conditions.

Problem: This still permits substantial anonymous funding, reducing transparency and leaving voters unable to see who is influencing elections.

Expenditure Oversight Gaps (Sections 2–3)

While expenditures above \$50 require checks or electronic authorization, smaller cash expenditures (up to \$50, or aggregate \$5,000/year) are allowed with minimal oversight.

Problem: This creates opportunities to circumvent reporting and conceal small but frequent payments, particularly in local or municipal races.

Weak Identification Requirements for Printed and Broadcast Material (Sections 8–12)

The bill provides multiple exceptions and broad allowances for identification on printed matter and broadcasts.

Certain collective funding or corporate-paid material may obscure actual sponsors.

Problem: Voters may not be able to identify the true source of campaign messaging, weakening accountability.

Prohibited Practices Not Fully Enforced (Sections 12–13)

While the bill forbids offering prizes to solicit endorsements or mail delivery, it exempts campaign staff and automated recurring donations are prohibited.

Problem: Enforcement gaps and vague language could allow creative circumvention, leaving loopholes for indirect influence.

Risk of Confusing or Incomplete Reporting (Sections 14–15)

The bill requires solicitations to disclose the benefiting committee but does not standardize or enforce format or verification.

Problem: Voters and regulators may struggle to verify contribution flows, limiting meaningful oversight.

Conclusion

HB?1788, while framed as campaign finance reform, creates new loopholes and ambiguities that reduce transparency, weaken accountability, and may erode public confidence in Missouri elections.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the House Elections Committee to oppose HB?1788.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: STEVEN GROSS		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
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Red Flags & Recommended Amendments

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Overbroad Recurring Donation Ban

This removes a critical tool for grassroots challengers. A better approach would be to mandate clear "opt-in" requirements and easy cancellation steps rather than a total prohibition.

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Selective Application / Loophole Risk

The ban currently only targets "campaign committees." This could allow other committee types to continue the practice, creating an unlevel playing field and encouraging activity to migrate to less-regulated structures.

Recommendation:

I support the transparency goals regarding solicitation disclosures. However, I have serious concerns that the recurring-donation ban is an unnecessary, overly broad restriction that fails the "least-government option" test. I recommend amending the bill to focus on informed consent rather than a prohibition.