



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 1828		DATE: 2/4/2026
COMMITTEE: Special Committee on Tourism		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: HENRIO THELEMAQUE		PHONE NUMBER: 678-799-4815
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI NATIONAL VETERANS MEMORIAL		TITLE:
ADDRESS: 211 EAST CAPITOL AVE		
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65109
EMAIL: henrio@ttglobby.com	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 2/4/2026 12:04 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.
We support the representatives efforts on this bill.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ARNIE C. AC DIENOFF-STATE PUBLIC ADVOCATE		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: In-Person		SUBMIT DATE: 2/4/2026 11:42 PM
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I am Opposed to this Bill. We as a State NEED to cut the Appropriations Budget by \$1-Billion in 2027 and \$1-Billion Dollars in 2028. Our State can not afford yet another project Costing \$500,000. This money should come from Private Funding and Fundraisers.



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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: 2/3/2026 10:31 AM

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I submit this testimony in opposition to HB 1828 based on constitutional infirmities, arbitrary earmarking, and improper delegation of public funds, not on opposition to veterans' services or memorialization.

1. Population-Based Earmarks Create Arbitrary Classifications

HB 1828 authorizes transfers of public funds to municipalities and counties defined by extremely narrow population brackets that function as de facto identifiers, not neutral classes.

These provisions:

Identify specific political subdivisions without naming them

Exclude similarly situated veterans and communities statewide

Lack a rational, statewide classification tied to veterans' need or access

This structure raises equal-protection and special-law concerns under the Missouri Constitution, which prohibits legislation that operates on closed or artificially narrow classes rather than uniform application.

2. Retroactive and Frozen Eligibility Undermines Public Purpose

The bill preserves language restricting memorial funding to:
 "applications received ... prior to July 1, 2004"

This creates:

A closed, retroactive funding universe

No present-day application process

No rational connection between current appropriations and current veterans' needs

Public funds must serve a current public purpose, not perpetuate historical allocations without re-evaluation.

3. Trust Fund Used as a Pass-Through for Local Projects

While styled as a capital improvement trust fund, HB 1828 allows the fund to operate as a pass-through mechanism for:

**Local memorials
Local museums
Local construction projects**

This blurs the line between:

**Statewide veterans' services, and
Targeted local capital projects better addressed through local funding or appropriations bills**

Trust funds are not intended to function as statutory earmark pipelines.

4. No Uniform Standards, Metrics, or Oversight Criteria

The bill does not establish:

**Objective statewide criteria for memorial funding
Comparative need assessments
Outcome reporting requirements
Geographic equity standards**

Absent these, appropriations risk being politically discretionary rather than policy-driven, exposing the program to challenge for lack of rational basis.

5. Veterans' Services Are Being Mixed with Symbolic Infrastructure

HB 1828 commingles:

**Essential veterans' services (homes, cemeteries, service officers)
With symbolic and commemorative construction projects**

This weakens fiscal discipline and invites future expansion of non-essential expenditures under the umbrella of veterans' care.

HB 1828:

Creates constitutionally suspect population-based earmarks

Locks public funds into outdated and closed eligibility schemes

Converts a statewide trust fund into a selective local subsidy mechanism

Veterans deserve uniform, transparent, and needs-based funding, not symbolic carve-outs embedded in statute.

For these reasons, HB 1828 should not advance in its current form.