



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 1905		DATE: 1/14/2026	
COMMITTEE: Special Committee on Rural Issues			
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: ALAYNA FORCK		PHONE NUMBER: 573-893-4181	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: MISSOURI CORN GROWERS ASSOCIATION		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 3118 EMERALD LANE			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65109
EMAIL: aforck@mocorn.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/14/2026 4:50 PM	
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WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: BEN TRAVLOS		PHONE NUMBER: 573-635-3819
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION		TITLE:
ADDRESS: 734 S. COUNTRY CLUB DRIVE		
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65109
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/14/2026 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: BILLY POLANSKY		PHONE NUMBER: 573-514-4174	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: COLUMBIA CENTER FOR URBAN AGRICULTURE		TITLE: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS: PO BOX 1742			
CITY: COLUMBIA		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65205
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/14/2026 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: GANNON SEYER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: In-Person		SUBMIT DATE: 1/14/2026 3:39 PM
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I support the passage HB 1905.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: HEATHER FLETCHER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: MISSOURI FARMERS CARE		TITLE: PROGRAM DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS: 734 S. COUNTRY CLUB DRIVE			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65109
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/14/2026 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: LYRA NOCE		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 1/14/2026 3:35 PM	

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Agriculture remains one of Missouri’s most vital economic drivers, employing nearly 460,000 people statewide. The average Missouri farmer is approximately 57 years old, and while Missouri has the second-highest number of farms in the nation, that number continues to decline. These realities underscore the importance of investing in strong agricultural education programs that prepare the next generation of farmers, scientists, and land stewards.

When discussing the implementation of agricultural education, the most significant barriers districts face are staffing and sustainable funding. Without consistent resources, even the strongest programs struggle to maintain long-term impact.

My name is Lyra Noce, and I am the Garden Educator at the Southern Boone Learning Garden in Ashland, Missouri. This program is operated by the Southern Boone School District in partnership with the Southern Boone Learning Garden nonprofit organization. The Learning Garden began in 2007 as an after-school garden club serving just 13 students, led by a small group of dedicated parents and volunteers. Since that time, the program has grown significantly in both scope and community support. In 2017, the Southern Boone County School District formally adopted the program, providing full-time staffing support with an educator and instructional aide.

- Today, the Learning Garden includes:
- 40 raised garden beds
 - Fruit trees and a field garden
 - Hoop houses for extended crop production
 - An indoor/outdoor classroom constructed in 2020
 - A planned greenhouse for future expansion

The Learning Garden is fully integrated into the school-day schedule. Every pre-kindergarten through fourth-grade class visits the garden monthly for hands-on instruction, reaching approximately 850 students each year. Our program focuses on garden-based learning, nutrition education, agriculture, environmental science, and conservation. Through collaboration with classroom teachers, our lessons align directly with Missouri learning standards and curriculum requirements.

My predecessor and I had the opportunity to participate in the state pilot program for science and agriculture education. We found it to be an excellent resource for districts that do not already have established programming. The MySci curriculum developed by Washington University provided high-quality, easy-to-implement lessons that integrated seamlessly into classroom instruction. While our district already had a well-developed program, the pilot demonstrated how accessible and effective these resources can be for schools across the state. The benefits to our students are measurable. We have seen:

- Increased enthusiasm for agricultural learning

Improved nutrition awareness and healthier food choices

Greater interest in conservation and natural resources

Increased enrollment in high school agriculture courses

Growth in FFA participation

We are not only preparing future farmers and scientists we are helping students develop a lifelong connection to food, land, and learning. Our district is fortunate to have strong community support and a committed nonprofit partner. However, many districts across Missouri do not have access to these same resources.

Agricultural education programs should not depend solely on local fundraising or volunteer capacity. They should be accessible to every student in our state. I respectfully urge you to support HB 1905 and continue investing in agricultural education for Missouri's children. These programs strengthen our workforce pipeline, support rural communities, and preserve Missouri's agricultural legacy.

Thank you for your time and your commitment to education and agriculture.



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WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: MARK FIEGENBAUM		PHONE NUMBER: 573-690-8580
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI FARM BUREAU		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: MO
EMAIL:		ZIP:
ATTENDANCE:		SUBMIT DATE: 1/14/2026 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: OTTO FAJEN		PHONE NUMBER: 573-634-3202	
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI NEA		TITLE: DIRECTOR OF LEGISLATIVE POLICY	
ADDRESS: 1810 E. ELM ST.			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65101
EMAIL: otto.fajen@mnea.org	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 1/14/2026 2:54 PM	
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The Association supports expanding this pilot program to a voluntary statewide optional program.



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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: 1/14/2026 10:28 AM
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I oppose HB 1905. I was not aware this elementary agricultural education pilot even existed, which highlights a larger concern with this bill. A program should not be expanded statewide when parents, educators, and the public were never meaningfully informed or shown evidence of its effectiveness. Moving from a limited pilot to statewide implementation without transparency, clear evaluation results, or defined funding creates unnecessary risk for schools and students. Elementary education should prioritize foundational academic development, not early career-tracking without broad public discussion.

Until the state can demonstrate clear outcomes, parental awareness, and local control protections, I oppose HB 1905.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: PERRY GORRELL		PHONE NUMBER: 573-751-7533	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION		TITLE: CHIEF OF GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS	
ADDRESS: 205 JEFFERSON STREET			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65102
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/14/2026 12:00 AM	
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