



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
**WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM**

BILL NUMBER: <b>HB 1963</b>		DATE: <b>2/11/2026</b>	
COMMITTEE: <b>Professional Registration and Licensing</b>			
<b>TESTIFYING:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>REGISTERED LOBBYIST:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>JESSICA PETRIE</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>573-635-6092</b>	
REPRESENTING: <b>NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS MO CHAPTER; BURRELL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH</b>		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: <b>PO BOX 1805</b>			
CITY: <b>JEFFERSON CITY</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>65109</b>
EMAIL: <b>jessica@wintonpolicygroup.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>In-Person</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/11/2026 8:16 AM</b>	
<b>THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.</b>			



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>REGISTERED LOBBYIST:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>MADLINE L'ECUYER</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>314-803-6477</b>
REPRESENTING: <b>NEW VISION COUNSELING</b>		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY: <b>JEFFERSON CITY</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>
		ZIP: <b>65101</b>
EMAIL: <b>madeline@ttglobby.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>In-Person</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/11/2026 8:12 AM</b>
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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>ARNIE "HONEST-ABE" DIENOFF-STATE PUBLIC ADVOCATE</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>In-Person</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/11/2026 11:34 PM</b>	
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**I am Opposed to this Bill and lessening the Requirement for Social Workers.**



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>SARAH BERRY</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/6/2026 2:10 PM</b>	

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

**HB 1963 is a dangerous bill masquerading as professional reform.**

**This legislation dismantles long-standing social work safeguards while offering no data, no findings, and no demonstrated public benefit. It lowers experience thresholds, fragments licensure categories, and injects ambiguity into scope-of-practice rules that courts, agencies, and families rely on every day.**

**The result is not modernization—it is regulatory negligence.**

**Social workers operate at the most coercive intersections of government power: child removal, involuntary treatment, court testimony, disability determinations, and family separation.**

**When the state licenses a social worker, it is certifying competence to influence lives, liberty, and parental rights. HB 1963 weakens that certification.**

**Reducing required supervised experience from five years to three years across multiple license tiers is not a minor adjustment—it is an acceleration of authority without justification.**

**The bill provides no evidence that the existing standards are excessive, discriminatory, or harmful. It simply assumes risk away.**

**The creation of an “advanced macro social worker” license further compounds the danger.**

**The bill authorizes broad influence—assessment, mediation, supervision, testimony, policy implementation—while prohibiting diagnosis and psychotherapy, yet simultaneously blurring supervision pathways and responsibilities. This is a legal and professional contradiction that will surface immediately in courtrooms, administrative hearings, and child welfare cases.**

**When harm occurs—and it will—the state will not be able to plausibly argue that it maintained clear, rigorous standards. HB 1963 increases exposure to civil liability, administrative appeals, and federal scrutiny by eroding definitional clarity that protects both clients and the state.**

**This bill also relies heavily on future rulemaking to resolve fundamental questions the legislature is obligated to answer now. Scope of practice, supervision authority, and competency thresholds should not be delegated to regulatory bodies after the fact. That is legislative abdication.**

**If Missouri is facing a social work workforce crisis, this bill does nothing to address the real causes: burnout, caseload volume, inadequate compensation, secondary trauma, and unsafe working conditions.**

**Instead, it cheapens the license and shifts the risk downstream—to children, families, courts, and taxpayers.**

**Lowering the bar is not expanding access.  
Accelerating licensure is not protecting the public.**

**Delegating clarity is not accountability.**

**HB 1963 should not be amended.  
It should not be “studied further.”  
It should be rejected outright.  
Vote NO on HB 1963.**

#### **Constitutional Due Process Risk**

**HB 1963 creates a direct and foreseeable risk of violating constitutional due process protections under both the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and Article I, Sections 10 and 18 of the Missouri Constitution.**

**Social workers routinely generate records, assessments, recommendations, and testimony that are relied upon by courts and state agencies in proceedings affecting fundamental rights, including parental rights, bodily autonomy, liberty interests, and access to benefits. When the state lowers licensure standards, accelerates supervisory timelines, and introduces new license categories with ambiguous authority, it undermines the reliability of those determinations at the constitutional level.**

**Due process requires that state action affecting fundamental rights be grounded in fair procedures and competent, reliable decision-making. HB 1963 weakens that foundation by authorizing individuals with substantially reduced supervised experience to exercise professional judgment that may directly trigger custody loss, service denial, involuntary interventions, or adverse judicial findings.**

**The bill’s blurred supervision structures and overlapping scopes of practice further exacerbate this risk. When it becomes unclear who is legally authorized to assess, supervise, recommend, or testify—and under what level of oversight—the affected individual is deprived of meaningful notice, accountability, and the ability to challenge the state’s action. That is a textbook procedural due process defect.**

**Missouri courts do not operate in a vacuum. Federal courts have repeatedly scrutinized state licensing and professional standards when those standards are tied to coercive government action. By diluting licensure rigor without evidentiary justification, the General Assembly invites constitutional challenges that will not be borne by bill sponsors, but by families, children, counties, and the state treasury.**

**If enacted, HB 1963 will not merely “modernize” social work regulation—it will weaken the evidentiary integrity of state action itself. That exposure is unnecessary, avoidable, and irresponsible.**