



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 1974		DATE: 2/25/2026	
COMMITTEE: General Laws			
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: 2/25/2026 12:00 AM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			



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WITNESS NAME		
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: BYRON KEELIN	PHONE NUMBER: 314-402-0655	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: FREEDOM PRINCIPLE	TITLE: PRESIDENT	
ADDRESS: PO BOX 2		
CITY: BALLWIN	STATE: MO	ZIP: 63022
EMAIL: freedomprinciplemo@protonmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/25/2026 5:54 AM

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

The Freedom Principle is dedicated to supporting families in need. We strongly support this bill to strengthen guidelines around the use of TANF and SNAP benefits. Our public assistance programs are intended to help vulnerable families meet fundamental needs such as food, shelter, and clothing. By restricting the use of EBT cards at casinos, liquor stores, and other inappropriate venues, the bill protects taxpayer resources and ensures that assistance is directed toward its true purpose—nourishing children and stabilizing families. Moreover, prohibiting the purchase of items like alcohol and tobacco with these benefits aligns intending to promote healthy, productive households and discourage behaviors that could undermine family well-being. These safeguards are necessary for maintaining public trust in safety net programs and for making certain that every dollar allocated truly benefits those in need. We urge lawmakers to pass this bill to help families thrive and preserve the integrity of our social support systems.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: DANA BUTLER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/25/2026 3:14 PM

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HB 1974 strengthens restrictions on Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and SNAP benefits by prohibiting EBT card use for cash withdrawals or purchases at inappropriate locations like liquor stores, casinos, and adult entertainment venues. It also bans the purchase of items such as alcohol, lottery tickets, tobacco, pornography, and soft drinks (pending federal waiver approval). Taxpayers should not be forced to fund misuse of public assistance—funds must support the basic needs of children and families, not discretionary or harmful items. Commonsense reforms promote accountability, protect Missouri's budget, and ensure assistance goes where it's intended: to help eligible American citizens and families in genuine need.



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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: KATIE GAMBLE		PHONE NUMBER: 573-634-4876	
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI BEVERAGE ASSOCIATION		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: PO BOX 1865			
CITY: JEFF CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65102
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/25/2026 12:00 AM	
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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: 2/25/2026 10:27 PM

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I am writing to register my strong opposition to House Bill 1974. These bills represent a cruel and counterproductive attack on our most vulnerable residents. They would create needless barriers to food and healthcare, punish families, and ultimately cost our state more than they would save.

HB 1974 is a solution in search of a problem. It adds redundant layers of bureaucracy to the administration of SNAP and MO HealthNet. The bill requires unnecessary documentary proof of citizenship for every applicant, mandates use of the SAVE verification system at every redetermination, and even forbids agencies from accepting electronic database matches as proof of identity. This is not about preventing fraud. It is about creating so much red tape that eligible Missourians, including citizen children and working families, will be denied benefits not because they are ineligible, but because they got lost in the paperwork.

The bill singles out mixed-status families for punishment. It forces the state to count the income of an ineligible parent against their citizen children, even going beyond federal rules to ban the option of prorating that income. This is a direct attack on the 90,000 citizen children in Missouri who live with at least one non-citizen family member. These children are U.S. citizens. They should not be denied food because of their parents' immigration status.

These bills operate from a false premise that our public benefits systems are overrun with ineligible immigrants. In reality, federal law already strictly limits immigrant eligibility for these programs. These bills do not close a loophole. They build a wall of paperwork and bureaucracy that will hurt U.S. citizen children, the elderly, and people with disabilities who need help the most. The only thing these bills will accomplish is to increase administrative costs, deny food to hungry kids, and push more families into deeper poverty.

I urge you to reject these harmful bills.



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WITNESS NAME		
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: MALLORY RUSCH		PHONE NUMBER: 314-306-8945
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: EMPOWER MISSOURI		TITLE: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
ADDRESS: PO BOX 104900		
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65110
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/25/2026 12:00 AM
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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: 2/25/2026 10:26 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: 2/24/2026 12:49 PM

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HB 1974 creates significant federal compliance and constitutional risk.

1. Federal Preemption (SNAP & TANF Structure).

SNAP is governed by federal statute and regulation (7 U.S.C. §2011 et seq.; 7 C.F.R. Parts 271–285). States may administer, but cannot impose categorical purchase restrictions, transaction bans, or access limitations inconsistent with federal law absent express waiver authority. Prohibiting EBT cash access, imposing state-defined “prohibited purchases,” and conditioning benefit use beyond federal restrictions risks conflict preemption and loss of federal funds.

2. Vagueness and Overbreadth.

The definition of “prohibited purchase” includes items the department determines by rule are “primarily marketed for or used by adults eighteen years of age or older and not in the best interests of a child or household.” This standard is subjective and undefined, creating arbitrary enforcement exposure under the Due Process Clause.

3. Excessive Penalty Structure.

Automatic multi-month and five-year disqualifications for EBT misuse, without proportionality safeguards, raise procedural due process concerns—particularly where misuse may involve minor or disputed transactions.

4. Residency Suspension Trigger.

Automatic suspension for failure to conduct an in-state EBT transaction within 90 days risks wrongful deprivation of benefits for lawful recipients temporarily out of state (employment, caregiving, medical travel), implicating procedural due process protections.

5. Soft Drink Ban Waiver Mandate.

Mandating annual federal waiver requests converts a federal policy question into recurring administrative and litigation risk without guarantee of approval.

HB 1974 expands enforcement complexity while increasing constitutional exposure. For these reasons, I respectfully urge a Do Not Pass vote.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: AMANDA (MANDI) ADAMS		PHONE NUMBER: 573-751-5222	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: DEPT. OF SOCIAL SERVICES, FAMILY SUPPORT DIV.		TITLE: DIVISION DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS: 615 HOWERTON CT			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65101
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/25/2026 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME		
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: JENNIFER LOVEALL		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES		TITLE: FISCAL MANAGER
ADDRESS: 615 HOWERTON CT.		
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65109
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/25/2026 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: RON LEONE		PHONE NUMBER: 573-864-5189	
REPRESENTING: MPCA - MO PETROLEUM & CONVENIENCE ASSN.		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 205 E CAPITOL AVE, SUITE 200			
CITY: JC		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65101
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/25/2026 12:00 AM	
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