



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2274		DATE: 1/15/2026	
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
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: AVERY FRANK		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
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CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/15/2026 9:40 AM	
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TO THE HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THIS COMMITTEE

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Avery Frank. I am a senior policy analyst at the Show-Me Institute, a nonprofit, nonpartisan, Missouri-based think tank that advances sensible, well-researched, free-market solutions to state and local policy issues. The ideas presented here are my own and are offered in consideration of fostering flexibility in Missouri's public education system.

Reducing Uncertainty for Out-of-State Teachers

In 2020, Missouri adopted a form of universal licensing reciprocity allowing most licensed professionals (with some exceptions) who have held a valid license issued by another state for at least one year to practice in Missouri at the same occupation or level, meaning that they would have Missouri examination, educational, or experience licensing requirements waived.¹

Teachers are among the many licensed professions in Missouri, and this reciprocity regime is beneficial as it currently stands. However, uncertainty remains for many out-of-state teachers who may seek to relocate to Missouri. For example, which Missouri teaching license is equivalent to their current out-of-state license?² Additionally, existing statute allows relevant licensing authorities up to six months to issue a licensing waiver.³ Together, these uncertainties can reduce Missouri's attractiveness as a place to move and teach.

House Bill 2274 would establish the Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact in order to address these challenges. If enacted, the compact would require each participating state to create and maintain a list of licenses it is willing to consider for equivalency. This would help teachers more clearly understand their potential teaching options and reduce uncertainty when considering relocation.

The interstate commission created by the compact would primarily function as a clearinghouse, or central information-sharing hub, for licensure and disciplinary information. Each state would retain full authority over who is licensed within its borders and under what conditions. While Missouri already provides a broad pathway for recognizing many out-of-state licenses, the compact would provide additional transparency and consistency that could make the state more attractive to prospective teachers.

Helping Address Teacher Shortages in High-Need Subject Areas and Schools

Missouri's teacher shortage has received significant attention in recent years.⁴ A closer examination of the state's pipeline and hiring trends suggests that Missouri does not face a broad, statewide shortage of teachers. Instead, shortages are concentrated in specific subject areas and in particular high-need, challenged districts.⁵

For example, between the 2017–18 and 2021–22 school years, the Hickman Mills C-1 school district reported a substantially higher percentage of vacant teaching positions than other Kansas City–area noncharter public school districts—more than five times higher than the second-highest district, Kansas City 33.6

While the compact alone will not provide a targeted solution to these types of deficiencies, it should improve Missouri’s overall teacher pipeline by making it easier for qualified out-of-state teachers to fill vacancies in hard-to-staff schools and subject areas, such as special education or physics. Kansas is already a member of this compact, and facilitating mobility for teachers living near the Kansas–Missouri border could benefit western Missouri districts in particular.⁷

CONCLUSION

House Bill 2274 offers an opportunity for Missouri to continue leading on occupational licensing reform while modestly improving access to qualified teachers in areas of greatest need. For these reasons, this bill could help make Missouri a better place to teach and live.

NOTES

1. The 2026 Blueprint: Moving Missouri Forward, Show- Me Institute, 12 Nov. 2025, www.showmeinstitute.org/publication/blueprint-for-missouri/the-2026-blueprint-moving-missouri-forward.
2. Missouri Teacher Certification for Out-of-State Teachers, Learn.org, learn.org/courses-and-certificates/missouri-teacher-certification-for-out-of-state-teachers. Accessed 14 Jan. 2026; Missouri Reciprocity Laws: What You Need to Know, LegalClarity, 25 Feb. 2025, legalclarity.org/missouri-reciprocity-laws-what-you-need-to-know.
3. Frank, Avery. Licensing Compact Exception Is Removed in Missouri, Show-Me Institute, 4 Jun. 2025, showmeinstitute.org/article/regulation/licensing-compact-exception-is-removed-in-missouri.
4. Fortino, Jodi. Missouri’s Teacher Shortage Isn’t Getting Any Better. Will Lawmakers Act on a Plan to Fix It?, KCUR, 10 Apr. 2024, www.kcur.org/education/2024-04-10/missouris-teacher-shortage-isnt-getting-any-better-will-lawmakers-act-on-a-plan-to-fix-it.
5. Frank, Avery. Missouri Sparks a Brighter Future for Students, Parents, and Teachers, Show-Me Institute, 23 Apr. 2024, showmeinstitute.org/article/education/missouri-sparks-a-brighter-future-for-students-parents-and-teachers.
6. Data provided upon request by DESE.
7. Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact: Compact Map, teachercompact.org/compact-map. Accessed 14 Jan. 2026.



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WITNESS NAME			
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WITNESS NAME			
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Adopting the compact would apply specific, baseline standards for certification reciprocity with fellow compact states.



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WITNESS NAME			
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WITNESS NAME: SARAH BERRY		PHONE NUMBER:	
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I oppose HB 2274 on procedural grounds.

As of 3:04 p.m. the day before this hearing, the official bill text has not been publicly posted. The public cannot meaningfully review, analyze, or respond to legislation that is not accessible in its final introduced form prior to a scheduled hearing.

Holding a hearing under these circumstances undermines transparency, informed public participation, and legislative accountability. Stakeholders — including educators, school districts, parents, and taxpayers — are effectively denied the opportunity to understand what is being proposed before being asked to comment on it.

Regardless of the bill's merits, process matters. When legislation is rushed to hearing without publicly available text, it erodes trust in the legislative process and invites errors, unintended consequences, and public backlash.

At a minimum, this bill should be held until the official bill language is published with sufficient time for public review.

For these reasons, I oppose HB 2274 at this time.



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WITNESS NAME: ALEX SERGENT		PHONE NUMBER: 270-614-1157	
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I am attending as the staff representative of the Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact to answer technical questions if needed.



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WITNESS NAME: PERRY GORRELL		PHONE NUMBER: 573-751-4446	
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