



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2409		DATE: 2/10/2026	
COMMITTEE: Economic Development			
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: ANDREA SITZES		PHONE NUMBER: 573-578-6608	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: MISSOURI ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL		TITLE: PRESIDENT	
ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 105918			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65110
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2026 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: BRAD JONES		PHONE NUMBER: 573-619-3077
REPRESENTING: NFIB (NATIONAL FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS)		TITLE: STATE DIRECTOR
ADDRESS: 2902 COUNTRY CLUB DR.		
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65109
EMAIL: Brad.Jones@nfib.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/5/2026 2:25 PM
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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: DAVID JACKSON		PHONE NUMBER: 314-406-2933	
REPRESENTING: WONDERSCHOOL		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE: MO	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2026 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: ELIZABETH GRACE RILEY		PHONE NUMBER: 573-634-4876	
REPRESENTING: NEXT MISSOURI		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 213 E CAPITOL AVENUE			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65101
EMAIL: grace@molobby.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2026 8:45 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: JACK GAMBLE		PHONE NUMBER: 573-821-5225	
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI STATE ALLIANCE OF YMCAS		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 213 EAST CAPITOL AVENUE			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65109
EMAIL: jack@molobby.com	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2026 8:10 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: JAMIE MORRIS		PHONE NUMBER:	
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI CATHOLIC CONFERENCE		TITLE: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS: 600 CLARK AVE, P.O. BOX 1022			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65101
EMAIL: morrisj@mocatholic.org	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2026 9:04 PM	
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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: JASON ZAMKUS		PHONE NUMBER: 573-291-6180	
REPRESENTING: NORTHEAST MISSOURI ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 1320 ELMERINE AVENUE			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65101
EMAIL: jzamkus@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2026 8:38 AM	
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WITNESS NAME		
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: JEN BERNSTEIN		PHONE NUMBER: 314-277-9080
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: NATIONAL COUNCIL OF JEWISH WOMEN ST. LOUIS		TITLE:
ADDRESS: 311 NORTH LINDBERGH BOULEVARD		
CITY: ST. LOUIS	STATE: MO	ZIP: 63141
EMAIL: jkbernstein314@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/6/2026 9:41 AM

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

Madam Chair and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to submit testimony in support House Bill 2409. My name is Jen Bernstein and I am the Advocacy Director at National Council of Jewish Women St. Louis (NCJWSTL). NCJWSTL is a non-profit organization in metropolitan St. Louis, representing over 5,000 members and supporters throughout the state. We focus our work on community service, advocacy, education and philanthropy to improve the quality of life for women, children and families while supporting individual and civil rights, and have been doing so since 1895.

NCJWSTL is submitting testimony in support of HB 2409 because access to affordable, reliable childcare matters to families, employers, and our entire community. By creating the Child Care Contribution Tax Credit Act, the Employer-Provided Child Care Assistance Tax Credit Act, and the Child Care Providers Tax Credit, this bill takes meaningful steps to strengthen Missouri’s childcare system and help working families thrive.

Childcare is essential infrastructure for Missouri’s economy. When families can’t find or afford care, parents are forced out of the workforce and businesses suffer. These targeted tax credits encourage private investment in childcare, help employers support their employees, and strengthen the childcare workforce. HB 2409 is a practical, bipartisan solution that benefits children, families, employers, and communities across our state.

We urge you to vote YES on HB 2409.



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WITNESS NAME		
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: JIM MALLE		PHONE NUMBER: 314-258-1306
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: ALIGNED		TITLE: DIRECTOR OF POLICY
ADDRESS: 6208 LARAN AVENUE		
CITY: ST. LOUIS		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 63109
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2026 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: JORDAN LEE		PHONE NUMBER: 816-803-4491	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: CITY OF RAYMORE AND WORKFORCE YOU		TITLE: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS: 100 MUNICIPAL CIRCLE			
CITY: RAYMORE		STATE: MO	ZIP: 64083
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2026 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: JOSHUA MCKIM		PHONE NUMBER: 660-582-4490	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: NODAWAY COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INC		TITLE: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS: 408 NORTH MARKET			
CITY: MARYVILLE		STATE: MO	ZIP: 64468
EMAIL: developer@nodaway.biz	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2026 2:03 PM	

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Thank you for the opportunity to submit this written statement. My name is Josh McKim, and I serve as the Executive Director of Nodaway County Economic Development.

Nodaway County is located in the far northwest corner of Missouri and is home to approximately 22,000 residents. The county is anchored by major economic and institutional assets, including Northwest Missouri State University and Kawasaki Motors Manufacturing.

Affordable, reliable, and high-quality childcare has emerged as one of the most pressing economic development challenges facing Missouri. Across Northwest Missouri, all 18 counties have identified childcare access as a top legislative priority for 2026. Recognizing the severity of this issue locally, Nodaway County and the City of Maryville jointly commissioned a Childcare Study in 2025.

The findings of this study revealed a significant gap between supply and demand. While demand for childcare services in Nodaway County totals approximately 1,050 slots, the current supply of licensed childcare slots is only 379. This shortage results in an estimated annual economic loss of \$2.7 million to the local economy.

The impact on employers is substantial. Eighty-eight percent of local employers report that labor force participation would increase if childcare challenges were adequately addressed. Additionally, one-third of employers have lost employees due to childcare-related issues, and nearly all report experiencing workforce disruptions as a result of the limited availability of affordable, high-quality childcare.

With this in mind NCED strongly encourages you to consider HB2409 and how it could positively address the growing childcare issue.



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WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: KARA CORCHES		PHONE NUMBER: 559-859-7474
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY		TITLE:
ADDRESS: 428 E. CAPITOL		
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65101
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2026 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: MATT THOMPSON		PHONE NUMBER: 660-537-5234	
REPRESENTING: BJC HEALTHCARE, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 124 E HIGH STREET			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65101
EMAIL: matt@wintonpolicygroup.com	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2026 8:03 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: MATTHEW SMITH		PHONE NUMBER: 573-634-2246	
REPRESENTING: ASSOCIATED INDUSTRIES OF MISSOURI		TITLE: VP OF GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS	
ADDRESS: 3234 W TRUMAN BLVD			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65109
EMAIL: msmith@aimo.com	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2026 7:27 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: MICHAEL GROTE		PHONE NUMBER: 573-256-7060	
REPRESENTING: COLUMBIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 638			
CITY: COLUMBIA		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65203
EMAIL: Mike@ga2.us	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2026 9:07 AM	

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The Columbia Chamber of Commerce and the business community at large is supportive of this legislation and have been for a number of years.



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WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: MICHAEL HENDERSON		PHONE NUMBER: 573-520-7240
REPRESENTING: CHILD CARE AWARE OF MISSOURI		TITLE:
ADDRESS: 235 E HIGH ST, STE 301		
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65101
EMAIL: mike@cnmissouri.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2026 2:07 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo. Child Care Aware of Missouri (CCAMO) supports HB 2409.		



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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: ROBYN SCHELP		PHONE NUMBER: 660-441-3260	
REPRESENTING: KIDS WIN MISSOURI		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 3909 SHERMAN CT			
CITY: COLUMBIA		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65203
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2026 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: SAM PANETTIERE		PHONE NUMBER: 816-714-6876
REPRESENTING: NORTHLAND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE		TITLE:
ADDRESS: 4131 N MULBERRY		
CITY: KANSAS CITY		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 64116
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2026 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: SAM PANETTIERE		PHONE NUMBER: 816-714-6876
REPRESENTING: UNITED WE		TITLE:
ADDRESS: 2100 CENTRAL STREET 11E		
CITY: KANSAS CITY		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 64108
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2026 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: SAMUEL H. LEE		PHONE NUMBER: 314-368-4242	
REPRESENTING: CAMPAIGN LIFE MISSOURI		TITLE: DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 142585			
CITY: SAINT LOUIS		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63114
EMAIL: samuelhlee@mindspring.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2026 11:26 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: SHANNON COOPER		PHONE NUMBER: 660-890-1432	
REPRESENTING: GREATER KC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, CIVIC COUNCIL OF GREATER KC		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 208 MADISON			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65101
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2026 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: SUSAN HENDERSON MOORE		PHONE NUMBER: 573-268-6924
REPRESENTING: JE DUNN		TITLE:
ADDRESS: 630 BOLIVAR ST. SUITE 201		
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65101
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2026 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: TORI REAVES		PHONE NUMBER: 417-862-5567	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: SPRINGFIELD AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE		TITLE: PUBLIC AFFAIRS MANAGER	
ADDRESS: 202 S JOHN Q HAMMONS PARKWAY			
CITY: SPRINGFIELD		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65806
EMAIL: tmercado@springfieldchamber.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2026 12:31 PM	
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Chairwoman Gallick and members of the House Economic Development Committee:

On behalf of the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce and our 1500-member businesses, please accept this letter of support for House Bill 2409, sponsored by Representative Shields.

Access to affordable, reliable childcare remains one of the most significant barriers to workforce participation facing Missouri employers. Businesses across the Springfield region and the state consistently cite workforce availability as a top concern, and childcare challenges continue to limit parents' ability to enter or remain in the labor force. This directly impacts employers through reduced workforce participation, increased absenteeism, and challenges in recruiting and retaining talent.

House Bill 2409 takes a thoughtful, targeted approach to addressing this challenge by expanding the availability of childcare through market-based tax credit incentives. By supporting contributions to childcare providers, encouraging employer-provided childcare assistance, and helping childcare providers expand capacity and retain workers, this legislation strengthens the childcare ecosystem while avoiding mandates on employers or local governments. The bill's focus on childcare deserts, its use of caps, reporting requirements, and sunset provisions reflect a responsible, data-driven approach to tax policy.

The Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce strongly supports innovative solutions to workforce barriers, including policies that expand childcare access through voluntary, incentive-based programs. House Bill 2409 builds on prior efforts and represents an important step toward improving workforce participation, supporting working families, and strengthening Missouri's economic competitiveness. We respectfully encourage your support of House Bill 2409.

Sincerely,
Matt Morrow
 President and CEO
 Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce
 202 S John Q Hammons Parkway
 Springfield, MO 65806



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ARNIE "HONEST-ABE" DIENOFF-STATE PUBLIC ADVOCATE		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: In-Person		SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2026 11:18 PM

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I am Opposed to these Tax-Credits and giving away over \$70-Million in much needed State Revenue.



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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: 2/5/2026 12:46 PM	
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I submit this testimony in opposition to HB 2409.

Let me be clear: Missouri has a child care crisis. Parents can't work without care.

Providers can't stay open without stable revenue and staffing. Rural communities get hit the hardest.

But HB 2409 is not a solution — it is a tax-credit structure that lets the state “feel helpful” without guaranteeing results.

It is a complicated, cap-heavy, paperwork-driven program that shifts public money through credits and middlemen, and it does not require the one thing families actually need: more affordable, dependable child care slots.

1) This bill creates a subsidy system, not a child care system

HB 2409 creates three separate tax-credit programs, each capped at \$20 million per year. That's up to \$60 million annually, and it even allows cap increases in certain circumstances.

That is real money — and it should come with real accountability.

Instead, HB 2409 primarily rewards:
 whoever has the money to donate,
 whoever has the payroll to offset,
 whoever has the lawyers and accountants to file fast.

That is not how you fix access. That is how you build a credit marketplace.

2) “First-come, first-served” means rural Missouri loses again

The bill allocates credits on a first-come, first-served basis.

That is code for:
 Big companies, big metro applicants, and organizations with professional grant writers get funded first.

Meanwhile, rural providers who are barely staying open — and parents who have no options — are told to wait in line behind people with better paperwork.

A crisis program should be needs-based, not “fastest-finger-wins.”

3) It lets the state write checks without treating it like public spending

HB 2409 allows certain 501(c)(3) entities to receive refunds of credits even if they owe no taxes. That converts tax credits into direct cash payments.

If you're going to cut checks, then treat it like a public program:
clear performance requirements,
measurable outcomes,
audit standards,
and transparency.

HB 2409 does not meet that bar.

4) It hides program operations behind a legal carve-out

The bill says actions and communications under the program are exempt from Section 105.1500. Regardless of the intent, the effect is predictable: it reduces visibility into how a major public subsidy is administered.

Missouri does not need more “trust us” programs. We need programs that can be audited and explained to the public without a legal shield.

5) It does not require affordability for families
This is the biggest failure.

HB 2409 does not require:
child care rates to decrease,
sliding scale options,
reserved slots for working families,
wage standards for workers,
or measurable increases in capacity.

So the state could spend tens of millions and still end up with:
the same shortage,
the same prices,
the same staffing crisis.

That's not reform. That's a press release.

What Missouri actually needs instead

If the goal is to expand child care, then write policy that guarantees outcomes:

Direct grants tied to new slots, rural expansion, and affordability commitments

Workforce stabilization: wage supports and training pipelines

Facility support that prioritizes child care deserts, not donor networks

A program that is simple, auditable, and measurable

Conclusion

HB 2409 is well-intentioned, but it is structurally flawed. It builds a subsidy system that benefits those best positioned to use tax credits—not the families and providers most in need.

Legislators who genuinely intend to serve in future General Assemblies may wish to begin by voting

“No” on bills that erode legislative authority, obscure accountability, and trade transparency for administrative convenience. Governance is not measured by how much passes—but by how well the people can see what was done in their name.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to vote NO on HB 2409.

Footnotes:

[1] Missouri Constitution, Article III, §36

Requires that public funds be expended for a public purpose and allows the General Assembly to impose reasonable conditions to ensure accountability when public money or its equivalent (including tax credits and refunds) is distributed.

[2] Missouri Constitution, Article III, §37

Prohibits special laws where a general law can be made applicable and supports uniformity in programs affecting statewide public interests, including taxation and public benefits.

[3] Missouri Constitution, Article IV, §28

Mandates that state funds and programs be administered with fiscal responsibility and oversight, reinforcing the Legislature’s duty to ensure measurable outcomes when authorizing large public expenditures.

[4] Missouri Revised Statutes §135.800

Classifies tax credits as public policy instruments and recognizes them as a form of state expenditure subject to legislative limits and review.

[5] Missouri Revised Statutes §32.057

Establishes confidentiality protections for tax information, underscoring that exemptions from transparency statutes should be narrowly construed and justified by necessity.

[6] Missouri Revised Statutes §23.253 (Missouri Sunset Act)

Requires periodic legislative review of programs to assess effectiveness, cost, and necessity — reinforcing the expectation that programs demonstrate tangible outcomes.

[7] Missouri State Auditor — Tax Credit Accountability Reports (multiple years)

Consistently note that tax credit programs lacking clear performance metrics and outcome requirements are difficult to evaluate and may fail to achieve stated public purposes.

[8] Missouri Constitution, Article I, §14

Guarantees equal protection under the law, implicated when public benefit programs operate in a manner that predictably advantages certain applicants (e.g., first-come, first-served systems favoring large or well-resourced entities).

[9] Missouri Revised Statutes §33.080

Reflects legislative intent that unused or excess public funds normally revert to general revenue unless explicitly exempted, emphasizing the importance of restraint when shielding funds from reversion.