



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2458		DATE: 1/14/2026	
COMMITTEE: Judiciary			
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: ERIC D. JENNINGS		PHONE NUMBER: 573-526-4726	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: JUDICIAL CONFERENCE OF MISSOURI		TITLE: GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COUNSEL	
ADDRESS: 207 WEST HIGH STREET			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65102
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/14/2026 12:00 AM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ARNIE C. AC "HONEST ABE" DIENOFF		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
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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: 1/12/2026 10:19 PM	
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I submit this testimony in opposition to HB?2458, which proposes changes to Missouri’s laws governing orders of protection (§455.010, §455.035, §455.513, RSMo). While protecting victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking is crucial, this bill raises serious concerns regarding due process, juvenile protections, and clarity of enforcement.

Key Concerns

Ex Parte Orders and Juvenile Respondents (§455.035, §455.513)

The bill allows immediate ex parte orders when “good cause” is shown.

Respondents under 18 are to have cases transferred to juvenile court with a guardian ad litem if no parent/guardian is available.

Problem: The language is ambiguous regarding timelines and protections for minors. Without clear safeguards, juvenile respondents may face immediate restrictions without adequate notice, risking potential violation of due process.

Definitions of Abuse, Stalking, and Harassment (§455.010)

Expands “abuse” to include harming pets, coercion, harassment, sexual assault, and unlawful imprisonment.

“Harassment” is broadly defined as repeated conduct causing substantial emotional distress.

Problem: The expansive definitions could lead to overbroad application, potentially ensnaring individuals in protective orders for minor or ambiguous actions.

Service of Process and Enforcement Clarity (§455.035.2)

Failure to serve ex parte orders does not affect enforceability; minors must have service to parents, guardians, or guardians ad litem.

Problem: This could create confusion or inconsistent enforcement, particularly in rural areas or complex family situations.

Potential Overlap and Conflicts (§455.513)

Ex parte orders for child-related matters appear to conflict with existing custody proceedings.

Problem: Ambiguities may undermine court discretion and create conflicting orders between family court and juvenile court.

Conclusion

While the goals of HB?2458 — protecting victims and addressing domestic violence — are laudable, the bill in its current form introduces vague definitions, procedural ambiguities, and potential due process risks, particularly for juvenile respondents. For these reasons, I respectfully urge the House to carefully review these provisions and consider amendments before enactment.