



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2654		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			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: AARON GRIESHEIMER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2026 12:00 AM	
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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: DAVID JACKSON		PHONE NUMBER: 314-406-2933
REPRESENTING: GREATER STL INC.		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: MO
EMAIL:		ZIP:
ATTENDANCE:		SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2026 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: JARED HANKINSON		PHONE NUMBER: 573-634-3511	
REPRESENTING: MO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: PO BOX 149			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65102
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2026 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: JEFF MEREDITH		PHONE NUMBER: 417-237-7358	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: CARTHAGE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION		TITLE: CEO	
ADDRESS: 627 W CENTENNIAL AVE			
CITY: CARTHAGE		STATE: MO	ZIP: 64836
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2026 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: MARCIE LAWSON		PHONE NUMBER: 573-380-4658	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: BOOTHEEL PROGRESS WITH PARTNERSHIP		TITLE: PRESIDENT/CEO	
ADDRESS: 215 N. NEW MADRID STREET			
CITY: SIKESTON		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63801
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2026 12:00 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			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: MICHAEL EATON		PHONE NUMBER: 417-860-2003	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: MISSOURI ASSOC. OF MANUFACTURERS		TITLE: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS: 1329 E. REPUBLIC STE J			
CITY: SPRINGFIELD		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65804
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2026 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME		
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: MICHELLE HATAWAY		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT		TITLE: DIRECTOR
ADDRESS: 301 W. HIGH STREET		
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65109
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2026 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME		
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: RAY MCCARTY		PHONE NUMBER: 573-634-2246
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: ASSOCIATED INDUSTRIES OF MISSOURI		TITLE: PRESIDENT
ADDRESS: 3234 W TRUMAN BLVD		
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65109
EMAIL: rmccarty@aimo.com	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2026 8:01 AM

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Associated Industries of Missouri supports this bill. We have been searching for a capital investment credit for a long time. This uses part of the Missouri Works cap to accomplish that goal.



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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: SHANNON COOPER		PHONE NUMBER: 660-890-1432	
REPRESENTING: GREATER KC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, CIVIC COUNSEL 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: THOMAS "SHAD" BURNER		PHONE NUMBER: 573-576-2755	
REPRESENTING: SOUTHEAST MISSOURI REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INC		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 2220 N. FOUNTAIN			
CITY: CAPE GIRARDEAU		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63701
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2026 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: W. SCOTT SWAIN		PHONE NUMBER: 573-230-8138	
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 104 CLAY STREET			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65101
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2026 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ABIGAIL HERNDON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2026 6:21 PM
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This creates a massive loophole for data centers and tax liabilities. Data centers are already given massive tax abatements that it destroys and negates any benefits towards the economy. This is going to increase even more costs in energy and taxes for constituents. It's going to be a financial burden for the people.



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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 Tax Credits. This is over \$190-Million of Free Giveaways.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: PAT SCHULZE		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2026 6:54 PM
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Why would you pass any bill to further burden us already burdened tax payers and give breaks to the wealthy, private for profit powers that be? Shame on you if you do and you will have to meet GODS judgement one day. Stop this evil insanity. Surely you all have children and grandchildren to worry about. Your decision in this affects them more than you realize. And that's on you.



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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 12:37 PM	
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HB 2654 should be rejected because it authorizes a high-dollar discretionary tax credit program with weak statutory guardrails, minimal public accountability, and outsized fiscal risk, while repeating a pattern of economic-development policymaking that Missouri has already audited, litigated, and paid for.

This bill does not create transparency. It creates negotiated subsidies insulated from public scrutiny.

Core Objection

HB 2654 authorizes the Department to negotiate, award, and structure tax credits for capital investments of \$50 million or more based on discretionary criteria, while providing no independent verification mechanism, no enforceable performance standards written into statute, and no mandatory public audit trigger.

That is not economic development.

That is executive-branch dealmaking with taxpayer liability.

Structural Problems With the Bill

1. The “least amount necessary” standard is legally hollow

The bill repeatedly claims tax credits shall not exceed “the least amount necessary” to induce the project—yet:

- No statutory methodology is defined
- No independent cost-benefit analysis is required
- No counterfactual proof is mandated
- No burden of proof is placed on the applicant
- This phrase has repeatedly failed in Missouri economic-development litigation and audits because it is non-justiciable and unenforceable.

2. The Department is made judge, negotiator, and enforcer

HB 2654 concentrates authority by allowing the same agency to:

Approve eligibility
Determine incentive size
Evaluate company need
Draft clawbacks
Certify compliance

There is no external review, no automatic Auditor trigger, and no legislative ratification, despite the scale of public exposure.

That structure invites capture and shields failure.

3. Job creation is secondary, not mandatory

Despite rhetoric about jobs, the bill:
Does not require a minimum job-creation threshold
Allows retention in lieu of creation
Allows capital investment to dominate eligibility
Makes wage standards negotiable

This is a capital subsidy bill, not a workforce bill.
Missouri has already learned—at great expense—that capital investment alone does not guarantee public benefit.

4. Reporting requirements are weak and reversible

The annual report requirement:

Is filed with the same department that negotiated the deal

Has forfeiture language but no mandatory recovery

Does not require public disclosure in real time

Does not require independent verification

Missouri's audit history shows that self-reported compliance is insufficient, especially in large incentive programs.

5. This bill repeats known subsidy-failure patterns

HB 2654 mirrors past programs that:
Overestimated economic impact
Under-enforced clawbacks
Shifted risk to taxpayers
Delivered windfalls to firms that would have invested anyway

The exclusion of data centers does not cure this defect.

It merely narrows the class of beneficiaries, not the risk.

Constitutional & Fiscal Concerns

This bill raises serious concerns under Missouri's constitutional framework governing public funds:

Public purpose doctrine: Incentives must deliver a clear, enforceable public benefit—not speculative economic activity.

Separation of powers: Large fiscal commitments are effectively delegated without meaningful legislative oversight.

Uniformity & fairness: Small and mid-sized Missouri businesses are excluded from comparable relief, while large firms receive bespoke treatment.

Tax credits are expenditures, not abstractions.

They reduce revenue dollar-for-dollar and must be scrutinized accordingly.

Pattern Note for the Record

HB 2654 fits a broader legislative pattern this session:

Expansion of discretionary executive authority

Reduction of independent oversight

Reliance on aspirational economic claims

Deferred accountability

This pattern is already drawing audit attention across multiple policy areas. This bill will not age well.

Bottom Line

Missouri does not lack tax incentives.

It lacks discipline, transparency, and enforceable accountability in how they are awarded.

HB 2654 increases fiscal exposure without fixing known structural failures.

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 those reasons, I urge a NO vote on HB 2654.

Constitutional & Legal Footnotes (for the Record)

Mo. Const. art. III, § 36 — Public funds must be expended for a public purpose with enforceable benefit.

Mo. Const. art. IV, § 28 — Budgetary authority and accountability; tax credits function as appropriations.

Mo. Const. art. II, § 1 — Separation of powers; excessive delegation without standards is impermissible.

State ex rel. Nixon v. American Tobacco Co., 34 S.W.3d 122 (Mo. banc 2000) — Public-fund agreements must contain clear, enforceable terms.

Missouri State Auditor precedent — Repeated findings that economic-development incentives lack adequate verification and clawback enforcement.