



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2699		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			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: DAVID J KLARICH		PHONE NUMBER: 314-560-1616	
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI CIRCUIT JUDGES' ASSOCIATION		TITLE: ATTORNEY	
ADDRESS: 438 GATEFORD DRIVE			
CITY: BALLWIN		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63021
EMAIL: dklarich@sbcglobal.net	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 9:57 PM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			



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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	
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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: 1/14/2026 12:00 AM	
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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: 1/14/2026 9:17 AM	
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I oppose HB 2699.

This bill does not meaningfully improve public safety. Instead, it expands criminal liability using vague, subjective language that invites abuse and selective enforcement. Terms like conduct “reasonably calculated to harass or alarm” are not objective standards — they are permission slips for those in power to decide which speech they dislike.

HB 2699 elevates judges and prosecutors to a protected class while offering no equivalent safeguards for the public’s constitutional right to criticize, document, protest, or expose misconduct. That imbalance should concern anyone who values accountability over comfort.

Missouri already has laws addressing true threats, stalking, and violence. When lawmakers choose to broaden criminal statutes rather than enforce existing law, it signals not a safety gap — but an intolerance for scrutiny.

This bill risks criminalizing dissent, chilling journalism, and discouraging civic oversight at a time when transparency is already fragile. A justice system that cannot tolerate criticism does not become stronger — it becomes less trustworthy.

For these reasons, HB 2699 should be rejected.