



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2722		DATE: 3/11/2026
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: CHEYENNE VINYARD		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/10/2026 5:59 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

Listen we need these programs MORE NOW than we ever did the world is getting too expensive and too scary to take yet another program from the children of the world!!! This program has helped guide I and my kids growing up we need more child help programs not less!!!! You want more resources or more funding get rid of the child pedos let's give the death penalty to anyone who HARMS A child or make the pedos pay into our child education programs while they serve time or no more serving time let's get better harder laws against child pornographers child abuse child neglect child molester!!!!



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: DAVA-LEIGH BRUSH		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/8/2026 7:13 PM

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I have seen the struggles unhoused students face. I support this bill as a start to helping them move forward.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: DAVA-LEIGH BRUSH		PHONE NUMBER: 314-600-6018	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: MISSOURI EQUITY EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP		TITLE: PAL TEAM LEAD	
ADDRESS: PO BOX 1352			
CITY: ST. CHARLES		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63302
EMAIL: dlb@missouriequity.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/11/2026 5:43 PM	

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MOEEP supports this bill. We believe it will help support pupils who need and allow them equitable access to and be fully included in education in Missouri.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: GERALYN MADIGAN		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 3/9/2026 9:55 AM
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This kind of support is critical to the success of these vulnerable students.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: LACI HORN		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/8/2026 9:28 PM	
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: LINDA KRAM		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/8/2026 6:49 PM	
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WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: OTTO FAJEN		PHONE NUMBER: 573-634-3202
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI NEA		TITLE:
ADDRESS: 1810 E. ELM STREET		
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65101
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 3/11/2026 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: RODD MONTS		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: SCHOOLHOUSE CONNECTION		TITLE: DIRECTOR OF STATE POLICY	
ADDRESS: 4401A CONNECTICUT AVE. NW, #145			
CITY: WASHINGTON		STATE: DC	ZIP: 20008
EMAIL: rodd@schoolhouseconnection.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/10/2026 1:03 PM	
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SchoolHouse Connection Supports HB 2722

To Chair Lewis, Vice Chair Banderman and Distinguished Members of the House Elementary and Secondary Education Committee:

SchoolHouse Connection (SHC) is a national nonprofit organization working to overcome homelessness through early care and education. We provide strategic advocacy and practical assistance in partnership with early childhood programs, schools, institutions of higher education, service providers, families, and youth. This nonpartisan work has included collaboration in Missouri for many years.

SchoolHouse Connection strongly supports HB 2722. By establishing a statewide liaison within the Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development, this bill will help ensure that institutions across the state have the guidance, support and resources necessary to identify and meaningfully support students experiencing homelessness.

We appreciate Representative Douglass for addressing this critical issue because it is often under the radar. Homelessness among college students is common across the U.S. In 2023, a federal study found that 8% of undergraduates and 5% of graduate students experienced homelessness – representing more than 1.5 million college students nationwide. The Hope Center’s 2023–24 Student Basic Needs Survey and the Trellis Strategies 2024 Student Financial Wellness Survey found that roughly 14% of college students reported experiencing homelessness. Housing-related hardship is even more widespread: 48% of college students in the Hope Center’s survey and 43% in the Trellis survey reported difficulty maintaining stable housing, underscoring the number of students who are at risk.

These students face serious barriers that negatively impact their ability to remain in school through graduation. We recognize that postsecondary education is a key pathway out of poverty. The majority of well-paying jobs created since 2010 require some education beyond high school. Homelessness can limit those opportunities for many students.

A 2018 California State University study found that students experiencing homelessness or food insecurity had lower GPAs and greater academic concerns than their peers. They also deal with weaker academic foundations, limited family support, and lack of awareness of financial resources, according to challenges identified by the U.S. Government Accountability Office. SHC’s recent report

with Trellis Strategies documents compounding barriers – including financial insecurity, housing instability, food insecurity, and difficulty navigating institutional support systems. It also links housing instability directly to lower rates of postsecondary persistence and completion. Students experiencing homelessness often struggle not because they lack ability or motivation, but because they lack access to the basic resources and guidance needed to navigate complex systems. HB 2722 would address many of these issues.

The statewide liaison will conduct annual analyses of homeless student needs, track retention and graduation trends, and develop a college and career readiness model. Working across systems, the liaison will collaborate with high school staff to identify and support students into the postsecondary experience, build partnerships with financial aid, campus housing, and student support services, maintain a database of basic needs resources, establish housing plans during breaks, and publish a searchable public directory of each institution's designated homeless and foster student liaison.

This is smart legislation that represents a promising investment in improving postsecondary educational and workforce development outcomes. Students experiencing homelessness often overcome many hurdles just to reach college, and this bill could improve the likelihood that they can stay there, graduate, and go on to contribute meaningfully to their community. We urge the Committee to support HB 2722.

Respectfully,

Rodd Monts
Director of State Policy
SchoolHouse Connection
rodd@schoolhouseconnection.org



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: SALLY NICKEL		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 3/8/2026 7:00 PM
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: SUSAN GIBSON		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 3/8/2026 9:06 PM
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I appreciate that HB 2722 will create a liaison in the Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development to monitor the support and guidance of unhoused pupils, including working with high schools regarding incoming postsecondary students. Please advance this bill.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: ARNIE C. A.C. "HONEST ABE" DIENOFF		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: STATE PUBLIC ADVOCACY		TITLE: STATE PUBLIC ADVOCATE	
ADDRESS: PO BOX 1935			
CITY: O'FALLON		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63366
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 3/11/2026 12:00 AM	

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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: CHASE T COLTON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/10/2026 9:52 AM
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Parents as teachers and Pre-K are very important programs and need to be maintained. I have had two children go through the Parents as Teachers program, and 2 also go through the Wonder Years program. Both are necessary and very helpful to parents from all walks of life and it would be a shame to see Springfield lose such a great service.



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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: 3/11/2026 8:07 AM	
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HB 2722 establishes within the Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development a “Liaison for Postsecondary Education for Homeless Pupils” and creates a dedicated state fund to support the liaison’s activities.

The liaison would be responsible for:

- analyzing trends among homeless pupils pursuing higher education
- coordinating with high schools and colleges
- connecting students with housing, food banks, and mentoring programs
- developing data tracking and policy models related to postsecondary access for homeless youth.

The bill addresses an important population of students whose needs are already recognized under federal law, particularly the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

While the policy objective may be legitimate, several provisions raise governance, constitutional, and administrative concerns that warrant legislative clarification.

Structural Legal Concerns

1. Political Affiliation Restriction

HB 2722 requires that the appointed liaison:

“shall not be a member of any political party or a member of any committee of any political party.”

This restriction may raise First Amendment concerns under the freedom of association protections of the U.S. Constitution.

The Supreme Court has held that restrictions on political affiliation for government positions must be narrowly tailored and generally apply only to policy-making or confidential positions.

See:

- Elrod v. Burns
- Branti v. Finkel

Because the liaison role appears primarily administrative and advisory, the justification for prohibiting political party membership is unclear.

Absent a clear constitutional basis, the provision may expose the statute to challenge.

2. Creation of a Stand-Alone Executive Position

HB 2722 establishes an independently appointed liaison within an existing department but grants that position:

**independent staffing authority
authority to lease office space
authority to manage a dedicated state fund.**

**However, the bill does not clearly establish:
reporting requirements to the Coordinating Board for Higher Education
oversight mechanisms for expenditures
performance evaluation metrics.**

The creation of semi-independent executive positions without clear administrative supervision can create fragmentation within state agencies.

3. Data Collection and Privacy Considerations

The liaison is directed to develop:

“a database to track, monitor, and analyze trends in the rates of graduation and retention of homeless pupils.”

**Because the population in question includes minors and vulnerable youth, data collection efforts must comply with federal privacy protections such as:
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
McKinney-Vento reporting requirements.**

HB 2722 does not specify data-security standards or privacy safeguards for the proposed database.

4. Unclear Scope of Authority Over Higher Education Institutions

The bill directs the liaison to collaborate with:

**financial aid offices
housing offices
student support services.**

**However, Missouri institutions of higher education operate under varying governance structures, including:
state universities
community colleges
independent institutions.**

The bill does not clarify whether participation in the liaison’s initiatives is mandatory or voluntary, which could lead to implementation confusion.

Fiscal and Administrative Considerations:

The bill establishes a dedicated fund that does not revert to general revenue, which effectively creates a permanent program if appropriations continue.

While the program may serve an important purpose, legislators may wish to consider:

**sunset review provisions
reporting requirements to the General Assembly
performance metrics tied to program outcomes.**

Legislative Notice:

Members of the General Assembly are respectfully placed on notice that HB 2722 creates a new executive liaison position with independent staffing authority and establishes restrictions on political affiliation that may raise First Amendment concerns under established Supreme Court precedent.

Additionally, the bill authorizes the creation of statewide student data tracking mechanisms and administrative authority affecting higher education institutions without clearly defined oversight or privacy safeguards.

Clarifying amendments addressing political affiliation restrictions, administrative supervision, and data privacy protections would reduce potential constitutional and operational vulnerabilities in the statute.