



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2889		DATE: 1/20/2026	
COMMITTEE: Crime and Public Safety			
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: ARNIE C. AC "HONEST-ABE" DIENOFF-STATE PUBLIC ADVO		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 1/20/2026 11:58 PM	
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ASHLLII WINLAND		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/18/2026 5:04 PM	
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: DANNY WOODY		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/19/2026 9:36 AM	
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It's a no brainer. We have to stop the flow of illicit substances and mixes of substances at all levels. Please Help us save our country and or children along with all lives. This bill is a major step in a positive direction. This is a RED, WHITE, AND BLUE bill I'm proud to support



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: DAYNA BLANAR		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/20/2026 5:48 PM
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To the Members of the Committee,
My name is Dayna Blanar. I am a Missouri resident, a wife, a mother, and a grandmother raising my deceased sons' children. I submit this testimony in strong support of House Bill 2889 because my family's experience reflects a systemic failure that this bill directly addresses.
My son, Zachary, died on May 31, 2022, after using what he believed to be marijuana. He did not knowingly seek fentanyl. The substance he used was contaminated with fentanyl, and that contamination took his life.
In the weeks following my son's death, our family waited for answers and accountability. Instead, we encountered silence, delay, and unanswered questions. Eventually, I was told directly by the sheriff at the time that my son's case had, in his words, "fallen through the cracks." Hearing that about my child's death was heartbreaking. No parent should ever be told that their child's life was lost to a system failure and then left to live with that reality.
I share this not to place blame on individual officers, but to explain how current Missouri law allows fentanyl-related deaths to be deprioritized or abandoned when cases become difficult to prosecute under existing statutory requirements. When the law demands proof of drug mixtures and proof that a dealer knew of those mixtures, investigations can quietly stall even when a life has been lost. What makes this failure even more painful is that the individual responsible for distributing the substance that killed my son already had multiple prior drug convictions. In February of 2022, just three months before Zachary's death, that individual was given a suspended imposition of sentence instead of a prison sentence.
Had that individual been incarcerated at that time, my son would be alive today.
After Zachary's death, the same individual continued to cycle through the criminal justice system, accumulating additional drug-related charges and repeated probation violations, yet remained free. For families like mine, this represents a second trauma watching the system repeatedly fail to intervene while grieving a loss that was preventable.
Under current Missouri law, prosecutors are often required to prove not only that a controlled substance was delivered and caused a death, but that it was mixed with another controlled substance and that the dealer knew of that mixture. In fentanyl cases, this requirement creates a loophole so large that accountability is often impossible.
HB 2889 closes that loophole.
This bill recognizes a simple and painful truth: fentanyl alone is lethal. One substance can kill. One delivery can end a life. Accountability should not hinge on technical chemistry requirements or claimed ignorance when the outcome is death.
HB 2889 also makes clear that addiction, consent, or knowledge of the substance is not a defense. That clarification matters deeply to families like mine. After my son died, there was an unspoken

implication that because he struggled with marijuana, because he chose to use marijuana that day, that his death was somehow less deserving of justice. That belief is wrong and this bill rejects it. HB 2889 does not criminalize addiction. It does not target users. It applies only when a human being has died. What it does is ensure that Missouri law no longer allows responsibility to be shifted onto the victim while repeat offenders continue to evade meaningful consequences.

As a mother who lost her son, and as a grandmother raising children who now live every day with his absence, I am asking you to consider what our current laws permit and what they could prevent. No family should ever be told that their loved one's death simply "fell through the cracks."

I respectfully urge this committee to advance House Bill 2889.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Dayna Blonar
Missouri



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: EDWARD BISCH		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/19/2026 7:07 AM	
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I would like to submit anyone who sells counterfeit pills is knowingly deceiving and literally poisoning whoever buys them which potentially cause death by deception.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: JAMES WILLFRED		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 1/20/2026 12:25 PM	
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My name is Jim Willfred, and I lost my son. Austin in june of two thousand twenty 32 fentanyl poisoning. I have a nonprofit and it's called "a second chance at life." i'm a missouri state representative for drug.Induced homicide. I spend a lot of time with boots on the ground working with people that may have substance use disorder or families affected by someone that has. I work with the DEA and the police force and the task force to help bring drug dealers off the streets. I helped to advocate for the current drug. Induced homicide law, which is number RSMo 579.022. I was contacted six months ago.By the chief narcotics officer of the saint louis city police department. He explained to me that because of the current loophole and the current law, the detectives, we're very hesitant to investigate. As a matter of fact, I would not hardly do it at all. He explained the sense it said they annoyingly gave the substance with the containing 2 narcotics. That this law is too hard to uphold. I would like to remove that sentence because I personally know of many people who have died, including my son by something giving to them. That only had fentanyl in it Or maybe it had fentanyl, and other fillers, i'm for a fake pill to be made. Many people are out on the streets killing our children with these spills or this powder. And it not having any narcotic in it, except for the fentanyl. With fentanyl being declared a weapon of mass destruction, there is no reason that this law should maintain that there must be two narcotics in it. Please help this bill to pass. So that we may, stop the killing on our street.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: LANCE DILLENSCHNEIDER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/20/2026 8:08 PM

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My name is Lance Dillenschneider. My wife (Storm) and I have lost 2 Sons at the hands of those in our society that put easy money above the life of any of our sons and daughters! Our boys were productive citizens. College graduate , hard working, patriotic and were The heart and sole of our family. The loss of loved ones is only the beginning of the Pain and suffering that families feel from this scourge that has come upon our nation. My wife and I have spent 4 years traveling the state speaking to bring awareness to the public and to our elected officials... with the loss of our last son We worked closely with the Olathe Kansas Police dept. and due to the diligence of the prosecutor and Detective I am pleased to say the one that murdered Our second son has been arrested , facing 9 felony Counts. We believe this person is responsible for 3 deaths that we are aware of. I'm sure there are dozens more...Among many things we have learned thru This journey is that because of weak laws, most of these Murderous dealers don't get prosecuted and continue to kill for profit. It took a year to gather enough evidence to bring an arrest. Because the laws lean favorably to toward the dealers, it is often extremely difficult to even bring charges . Our law enforcement is so often hampered from doing their job. We are in favor of this Bill and ask for all decent caring public representatives to support these tougher laws to bring this epidemic to an end. This is not a republican or democrat issue... It's about life and saving it. We want to save all of your families from the unending pain that we will feel all the days of our lives, with my undying gratitude I thank you in advance for your support for this Bill. Sincerely
Lance Dillenschneider



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: LAURA S. WOODY		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/20/2026 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: RHONDA MAHER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/19/2026 7:50 AM	
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Please pass this bill. Dealing a deadly poison is Drug Induced Homicide.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: RION THOMAS		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/20/2026 12:04 PM

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For more than 10 years the increasing addition of fentanyl to other street drugs (including pills) for the purpose of a cheap method to increase potency and addiction has been known to every American with increasing deaths and injuries due to fentanyl. The death toll is staggering and is underreported, and unfortunately the term “overdose” is loosely used when an unsuspecting person dies from fentanyl poisoning. It is unrealistic to ignore the knowledge of the last decade of distributors and dealers of drugs actively adding fentanyl to other illicit drugs for potency and addiction, and therefore, the risk of any person dealing any illicit substance cannot ignore the inherent risk of dealing drugs and endangering others.

I want to issue my testimony into record that this is not a new problem or a shrinking problem and just like other criminals, they will think of new ways to sell drugs and infiltrate our unsuspecting American’s lives and each day people will continue to die from fentanyl poisoning. The term poisoning might help the court when you look up the definition compared to overdose; they are completely different yet unfortunately connected.

We need to make the punishment so painful that dealers and distributors would never risk dealing with a deadly drug and the risk of dealing deadly fentanyl. Just like driving a car, your assumed risk is not removed when you knowingly take responsibility in dealing or providing a drug to another person. The very fact that we are deliberating about whether killing another person this way to me compares to accidentally killing a person with their car. You cannot remove liability from the dealer or person that sells or distributes any illicit drug just like you cannot remove the liability from the person that drives a car or drives under the influence and kills another human being. When they decided to drive, they did not knowingly kill them prior to driving the vehicle, yet they knowingly took the risk and when a death results, they become liable immediately.

My daughter died 6 years ago on January 31st, 2020 by taking an illicit Percocet and she had never heard of fentanyl. Her boyfriend bought the pill knowing it was not from a doctor, and the dealer knowingly sold the pill knowing it was from the streets and was homemade. In this situation, my daughter did not get a second chance, the boyfriend, the dealer and the distributor should have been held liable for knowingly buying, selling and distributing illicit drugs. My daughter Gabrielle Thomas was murdered, poisoned by an illicit pill and although her death was investigated as a crime, it was later ruled an accidental death. Please do not allow this same process of law to continue because more people will die every day, and only through your positive change will we begin to curb the unfortunate appeal to dealers and distributors of making money by defining poisoning, removing the stigma of overdose, and changing the laws to hold them accountable to the highest degree of the law.

Sincerely,
Rion Thomas



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: SHANNON THOMAS		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/20/2026 12:57 PM	

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I am testifying on behalf of the house bill 2889 and also on the behalf of my first-born beautiful daughter, Gabrielle Smith Thomas whose life was stolen from her with zero remorse by a drug dealer who sold her boyfriend an illicit Percocet pill with Percocet pharmaceutical markings, when in fact it was illicit fentanyl per the coroner's report.

Our absolute frustration is that with such a powerful poison that is taking the lives of thousands yearly of unwitting victims, is being labeled by the laws and by all who fall under the law, and accidental death or an overdose. All who worked accordingly such as Police officers, Coroners etc. on my daughter's case did not see her as a human being who was effectively poisoned to her death, in one fall swoop by one pill.

Our daughter deserved a proper investigation, the investigating officers marked her death scene a crime scene, then later closed her case as an accident. Gabrielle's boyfriend bought this pill from a friend who was dealing with a larger ring of drug dealers stated by her boyfriend's own words. The police only questioned him ONCE at the crime scene, with no follow up! I later learned from the detective that they could not pursue the case as a homicide because the laws would not allow them to pursue it in that manner. I have often wondered how many other unsuspecting victims of poisoning were murdered along with my daughter that weekend with that exact batch of pills that were sold? Why do drug dealers get off to live their lives, have children, get married etc. when they are knowingly selling drugs that may or may not have fentanyl in it that murder other human beings often? This is the whole point, they don't always know what is mixed in what they sell, but they choose to put the dollar bill over the lives of those they sell to and even lie to about what they are selling.

My daughter did not know what was in that pill, her boyfriend expressed to us that she was physically hurting that weekend due to her roll over accident in which she had broken her hip, pubic bone, wrist, collar bone from 18 months prior, and she was still recovering from this accident that the weather changes often affected her. Because she did not want to wait in an emergency room for hours and being 27 years old and off of our family insurance, this decision caused her untimely death. I will leave you with Gabrielle's own last words that she wrote in her journal a few months before her death, Quote; " I want to be educated, I want to be a teacher in life, own my own business, be a happy wife with children, stability & love. I am most passionate about God, love and truth. I desire to sing across the nations, dance and write books to teach young people to value their souls. My unique gift I have to share with the world is my experience." – by Gabrielle Smith Thomas forever 27, 08/08/92-01/31/2020 murdered by a drug dealer with no consequence. She would have certainly made a positive impact in this world.

I ask as her mother that all her testimony be considered and how many lives can go on to fulfill their intended paths. Sincerely, Shannon Thomas



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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: 1/17/2026 2:44 PM	
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Members of the Committee,

HB 2889 removes a critical element of intent from existing law and replaces it with strict criminal liability for death, regardless of knowledge, foreseeability, or causation. This is not justice.

It is legislative overreach dressed as accountability.

By striking the requirement that a person know a substance is mixed or particularly dangerous, this bill collapses meaningful legal distinctions between:

intentional trafficking,

low-level distribution,

shared use among peers,

and individuals struggling with addiction themselves.

Under HB 2889, causation alone is enough to impose a Class A felony—the most severe non-capital punishment available under Missouri law.

That is an extraordinary escalation that ignores both constitutional principles and moral restraint.

Core Concerns:

1. Elimination of Mens Rea (Criminal Intent)

Missouri law has long recognized that punishment must be proportionate to culpability.

HB 2889 abandons this principle by removing any requirement of knowledge, intent, or recklessness regarding lethality.

This invites punishment without moral blameworthiness, a hallmark of unjust law.

2. Overbroad and Unjust Application

This statute will not target kingpins. It will ensnare:
people with substance use disorders,
individuals sharing drugs in moments of desperation,
and low-level actors far removed from manufacturing or adulteration.

The bill does nothing to distinguish between exploitation and tragedy.

3. Public Health Harm, Not Protection

Laws like this discourage emergency calls, deter overdose reporting, and drive drug use further underground. When fear of a life sentence outweighs the impulse to seek help, people die alone. That is a predictable and preventable outcome.

4. Moral Inconsistency

If the stated goal is to save lives, then a statute that:

criminalizes without intent,
ignores addiction as a medical condition,
and substitutes punishment for prevention
cannot credibly claim the moral high ground.

Justice that ignores compassion is not justice—it is vengeance by statute.

Conclusion:

HB 2889 replaces discernment with blunt force.

It expands state power at the expense of fairness, proportionality, and human dignity.

Missouri can address overdose deaths without abandoning the foundational principles of criminal law.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to reject HB 2889.