



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
**WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM**

BILL NUMBER: <b>HB 2913</b>		DATE: <b>2/18/2026</b>	
COMMITTEE: <b>Elementary and Secondary Education</b>			
<b>TESTIFYING:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>ARNIE "HONEST-ABE" DIENOFF-STATE PUBLIC ADVOCATE</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>In-Person</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/18/2026 11:54 PM</b>	
<b>THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.</b>			

**I am in Support of this Bill.**



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>CHARLENE CURRIE-GRISSOM</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/12/2026 9:34 PM</b>	
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**I am in support of this bill.**



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>DOROTHY TAYLOR</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/16/2026 8:19 AM</b>	
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**These children need a voice. Please consider these bills.**



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>JENNIFER SPURGEON</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>		SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/14/2026 10:39 AM</b>
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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>JOSH CHASTAIN</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>816-380-2727</b>	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: <b>HARRISONVILLE CASS SCHOOL DISTRICT R9 - HARRISONVILLE, MO</b>		TITLE: <b>SUPERINTENDENT</b>	
ADDRESS: <b>503 S LEXINGTON ROAD</b>			
CITY: <b>HARRISONVILLE</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>64701</b>
EMAIL: <b>josh.chastain@harrisonvilleschools.org</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/16/2026 12:28 PM</b>	
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**As a superintendent of schools, I believe that the hold harmless provision for teachers will support teachers in doing their job in the event of an incident of a student altercation or student on teacher violence incident. The legislation can be enhanced by adding that school districts should have the ability to determine and act on any gross negligence by the teacher if the incident warrants that action. It should not deem them fully immune.**



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>REGISTERED LOBBYIST:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>MIKE HARRIS</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>615-202-3579</b>	
REPRESENTING: <b>MISSOURI STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION</b>		TITLE: <b>GOVERNMENT RELATIONS MANAGER</b>	
ADDRESS:			
CITY: <b>COLUMBIA</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>65205</b>
EMAIL: <b>mharris@msta.org</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>In-Person</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/18/2026 12:06 PM</b>	
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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>MIKE SLAGLE</b>	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: <b>RAYMORE-PECULIAR SCHOOLS</b>	TITLE: <b>SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD O</b>	
ADDRESS: <b>21005 S. SCHOOL ROAD</b>		
CITY: <b>PECULIAR</b>	STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>64083</b>
EMAIL: <b>mike.slagle@raypec.org</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>In-Person</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/16/2026 11:52 AM</b>
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Chair and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on House Bill 2913.

This bill appropriately recognizes that when a teacher acts reasonably and in good faith to protect a student or students, that action should not become a legal risk.

I support the intent of this bill and offer a few suggestions to strengthen it while maintaining that goal.

First, clearer alignment with federal special education and restraint documentation requirements would be helpful. Schools must continue to meet those obligations after an incident, and clarifying that in statute would reduce confusion for families and staff and prevent disputes about whether protections apply.

Second, to ensure consistency and fairness for all Missouri students, the same requirements and protections should apply to private and parochial schools. Expectations for student safety should not depend on the type of school a child attends.

Third, as with many bills in early discussion, the current language contains phrases that need clearer definition. For example, "safeguard", "good faith", and "incident involving violence" are just a few.

HB 2913 is a positive start in achieving the bill's overall intent. These clarifications will provide staff with confidence while maintaining clarity for families and students.

Thank you for your consideration.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>MIKE SLAGLE</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:		SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/18/2026 12:00 AM</b>
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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>REGISTERED LOBBYIST:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>OTTO FAJEN</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>573-634-3202</b>	
REPRESENTING: <b>MISSOURI NEA</b>		TITLE: <b>DIRECTOR OF LEGISLATIVE POLICY</b>	
ADDRESS: <b>1810 E. ELM ST.</b>			
CITY: <b>JEFFERSON CITY</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>65101</b>
EMAIL: <b>otto.fajen@mnea.org</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>In-Person</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/18/2026 12:26 PM</b>	
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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>SUHASINI POKALA</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>		SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/13/2026 5:01 PM</b>
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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>CLAUDIA JENKINS</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE:      ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/13/2026 4:08 PM</b>
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As a mom of a child who was considered a "behavioral issue," I 100% oppose this bill. In my experience it gives the district and it's employees too much leniency to not be held accountable for the physical and psychological harm that some employees do to kids with challenges. In fact, the penalties for districts not following the current laws, should be stiffer. Schools investigating themselves is a joke.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>SARAH BERRY</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE:      ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/13/2026 12:17 PM</b>

**THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.**

Oh lawmakers bold with your pens in a row,  
 You're writing immunity — neat little bow.  
 But listen up kindly, before you all vote,  
 There's a few legal gremlins you ought to note.

You say, "Teachers are safe! Let them jump in the fray!"

But federal courts may not see it that way.

For Section One-Nine-Eight-Three doesn't just vanish —  
 State shields can't make federal lawsuits go banish.

You wrote "intervene" — but what does that mean?  
 A shove? A restraint? Something barely seen?

If words are too foggy and standards too wide,  
 A vagueness challenge may hitch up a ride.

And districts can't block what a teacher might do?  
 Well IDEA and due process still apply too.

You can't simply scribble "immune from the fuss"  
 And sidestep the Constitution because...

When force meets a student, courts look with care.  
 "Good faith" alone won't get you there.

Gross negligence carved as a tiny exception  
 Won't stop every federal inspection.

So here is the note for the journal and floor:  
 This bill may invite more suits, not fewer, for sure.

For state-made immunity, shiny and bright,  
 Cannot outrun federal rights.

**You may pass it with flourish, with speeches that cheer —  
But litigation season could follow next year.**

**The General Assembly is placed on formal notice that House Bill 2913 creates a statutory immunity framework that intersects directly with existing Missouri sovereign immunity doctrine (Chapter 537, RSMo), federal civil rights liability under 42 U.S.C. § 1983, and constitutional due process protections. While the bill purports to grant immunity for teachers intervening in violent incidents, the following foreseeable legal conflicts are evident:**

**Federal Civil Rights Exposure – State statutory immunity cannot preempt or nullify liability under federal law. Claims alleging excessive force, deprivation of constitutional rights, or discrimination remain actionable under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 notwithstanding any state “held harmless” language. A statutory declaration of immunity does not bind federal courts.**

**Vagueness and Standard Ambiguity – The phrase “intervene in an incident involving violence” is undefined and potentially overbroad. Without clear parameters, the statute risks inconsistent application and constitutional vagueness challenges, particularly where physical restraint or force is involved.**

**Conflict with Existing Use-of-Force and Student Discipline Frameworks – The bill’s subsection prohibiting districts from implementing policies that “prevent a teacher from protecting himself or herself or a student” may conflict with established restraint, seclusion, and discipline regulations, as well as federal disability protections under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.**

**Expansion of Institutional Immunity – Subsection 3 attempts to extend immunity to districts for teacher actions so long as the teacher “complies with the provisions of this section.” This language may create ambiguity regarding negligent training, supervision, or policy failures — areas traditionally subject to litigation analysis independent of employee immunity.**

**The record should reflect that state-level immunity provisions cannot displace federal constitutional standards, and enactment may generate litigation testing the scope and enforceability of the statute. The foreseeability of federal preemption and civil rights challenge is evident on the face of the bill.**