



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
**WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM**

BILL NUMBER: <b>HB 2921</b>		DATE: <b>2/10/2026</b>	
COMMITTEE: <b>Children and Families</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>BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>ALLISON HILTON</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>816-651-4262</b>	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: <b>SYNERGY SERVICES</b>		TITLE: <b>VICE PRESIDENT OF YOUTH SERVICES</b>	
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CITY: <b>KANSAS CITY</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>64155</b>
EMAIL: <b>ahilton@synergyservices.org</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2026 5:30 PM</b>	
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**Submitted by Allison Hilton  
 Vice President of Youth Services  
 Synergy Services  
 Kansas City, Missouri**

**Chair and Members of the Committee,**

**My name is Allison Hilton, and I serve as Vice President of Youth Services at Synergy Services in Kansas City. I oversee emergency shelter, transitional living, maternity housing, street outreach, and crisis services for youth experiencing homelessness and housing instability. I am submitting testimony in support of HB 2921**

**Neuroscience confirms that the prefrontal cortex, responsible for impulse control, risk evaluation, and long-term planning, remains under development into the mid-20s. Meanwhile, the brain’s reward system is highly sensitive to novel and high-stimulus content during adolescence.**

**Early exposure to explicit sexual material has been associated in peer-reviewed research with:**

**Increased rates of anxiety and depressive symptoms**

**Distorted beliefs about consent and healthy relationships**

**Compulsive usage patterns**

**Greater vulnerability to exploitation**

**National research indicates that many youth encounter pornography before age 13, often unintentionally. For youth with trauma histories, this exposure can reinforce coercive dynamics and complicate recovery.**

**Missouri already applies age-based restrictions to alcohol, tobacco, gambling, and firearms due to developmental risk. Extending reasonable digital safeguards to commercial adult content platforms is consistent with established regulatory precedent.**

**From a child welfare and youth services perspective, age verification represents a targeted harm-reduction strategy that supports healthy development while maintaining adult autonomy.**

**For these reasons, I respectfully urge passage of HB 2921**

**Thank you for your consideration.**



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>BYRON KEELIN</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>314-402-0655</b>
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: <b>FREEDOM PRINCIPLE</b>		TITLE: <b>PRESIDENT</b>
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CITY: <b>BALLWIN</b>	STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>63011</b>
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We strongly support Missouri's legislative efforts aimed at protecting minors from exposure to sexually explicit material online, as reflected in HB1839, HB2921, and HB3015. Each of these bills takes critical steps to require robust age-verification procedures for access to adult content websites, ensuring that commercial entities take responsibility for shielding children from harmful online material. It is notable that these three bills share nearly identical language and intent in holding companies accountable, specifying clear definitions, enforcement provisions, and exemptions for legitimate news and service providers. The underlying framework in each bill thoughtfully balances privacy concerns with practical verification methods and robust penalties for noncompliance.

While we believe all three bills would create meaningful protections for Missouri's young people, we would like to highlight our particular support for the additional public health warning provisions in HB1839. By requiring explicit warnings about the mental and emotional dangers of pornography, together with information about substance abuse and access to help resources, HB1839 delivers an extra layer of public health protection. These messages are crucial for raising awareness and reducing the stigma faced by individuals and families who may struggle with the consequences of harmful online content. We believe this aspect of HB1839 can empower at-risk youth and their families to seek support, making the bill a more comprehensive solution for safeguarding the well-being of Missouri's children. Therefore, while each bill is commendable, we encourage the adoption of the public health and substance abuse notification requirements contained in HB1839 as a model for strong, holistic policy.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>REGISTERED LOBBYIST:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>CURT WICHMER</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>573-635-7239</b>
REPRESENTING: <b>MISSOURI CATHOLIC CONFERENCE</b>		TITLE:
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CITY: <b>JEFFERSON CITY</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>
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EMAIL: <b>wichmerc@mocatholic.org</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>In-Person</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/9/2026 10:19 PM</b>

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Modern technology provides unprecedented access to adult content for both adults and minors. Restricting access to adult content will help keep this offensive and damaging material from reaching children.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>REGISTERED LOBBYIST:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>DAVID WINTON</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
REPRESENTING: <b>MISSOURI NETWORK AGAINST CHILD ABUSE</b>		TITLE:
ADDRESS: <b>PO BOX 1805</b>		
CITY: <b>JEFFERSON CITY</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>
		ZIP: <b>65102</b>
EMAIL: <b>david@wintonpolicygroup.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>In-Person</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2026 8:40 AM</b>
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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>REGISTERED LOBBYIST:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>MARY CHANT</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>573-303-6765</b>
REPRESENTING: <b>MISSOURI COALITION FOR CHILDREN</b>		TITLE:
ADDRESS: <b>213 E. CAPITOL AVE</b>		
CITY: <b>JEFFERSON CITY</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>
		ZIP: <b>65101</b>
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2026 12:00 AM</b>
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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>NEIL GETZLOW</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>913-940-2960</b>	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: <b>STOP SEXUAL EXPLOITATION-KC</b>		TITLE: <b>DIRECTOR</b>	
ADDRESS: <b>6610 N REVERE DR</b>			
CITY: <b>KANSAS CITY</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>64151</b>
EMAIL: <b>neil.getzlow@gmail.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/9/2026 9:15 AM</b>	

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

I am writing today in support of HB 1839, HB 2921 and HB 3015 that implements age verification for adult web sites in Missouri.

It is long past time to take the pornography problem in Missouri seriously and address it honestly as a public health issue.

I say this not as a culture warrior, but as someone who lived it. I struggled with a pornography addiction for nearly 40 years, beginning at age 10. Like many others, I used it the way people use drugs or alcohol, to numb emotional pain. In 2020, after confronting the underlying issues in my life and through my Christian faith, I was able to break free. Since then, I have worked with other men who desperately want to stop but find themselves unable to do so.

Their experience is not simply a matter of willpower. A growing body of research suggests that heavy pornography use affects the brain in ways similar to substance addiction. Studies cited by the National Center on Sexual Exploitation indicate that frequent use can alter brain function, particularly in the prefrontal cortex, the area responsible for impulse control, judgment and decision-making. In practical terms, that means diminished self-control and reinforced compulsive behavior.

The consequences are not abstract. Pornography is contributing to broken relationships, emotional withdrawal, and an epidemic of shame and isolation among men. Many suffer in silence, afraid to ask for help, which only deepens loneliness and mental distress. Meanwhile, children today are growing up with instant access to explicit content through their smartphones, content far more graphic and violent than anything previous generations encountered. Parents absolutely have a responsibility to monitor what their children consume. But parental responsibility and public safeguards are not mutually exclusive. Age-verification laws are a reasonable, common-sense step to support families.

Missouri already requires proof of age to purchase alcohol or marijuana because we recognize the harm those substances can cause developing brains. Pornography triggers similar neurological responses. Treating it differently makes little sense.

There is also a side of this issue we too often ignore: the human cost behind the screen. According to a 2020 report from Polaris, the organization that operates the National Human Trafficking Hotline, pornography is a significant driver of sex trafficking in the United States. Beyond exploitation, it shapes attitudes. teaching young men to view women as objects and teaching young women that their

**value lies primarily in sexual performance.**

**This debate is not fundamentally about free speech. It is about mental health, public safety, and human dignity. We regulate products that harm individuals and families. Pornography should be no exception. It is time for honest conversations, and thoughtful regulation, grounded in compassion, evidence, and concern for the well-being of our communities.**

**Neil Getzlow, Stop Sexual Exploitation-KC  
Kansas City, MO  
913-940-2960**



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>RACHEL ROBISON</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/9/2026 2:49 PM</b>	

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My name is Rachel Robison. When I was seven years old my favorite toys were barbies. I loved playing dress up and would

often solely wear princess dresses. About 90% of my childhood photos you can see me in a princess gown, with little plastic heels. I loved the color pink and would line my stuffed animals along my bed at night, saying goodnight to every single one of them, so none of them would feel

left out. When I was seven I was exposed to pornography, by another seven year old at a play date. My sweet, innocent heart was opened up to a world of brutality and sexual violence. Within development at age seven, most children are beginning to understand social rules, behaviors and relationships. There is a major need for affirmation in order to build confidence and instill

healthy identity in a child. With absolutely zero restrictions, I was able to access porn easily, without even needing to look for it. Though my parents had site blockers, it did not matter. I was able to by pass through, check a box I was "18" and a word I should have been protected from was thrown in my face. At seven years old I had no understanding of what I was looking at, or the damage it would cause.

That that one moment in time would cause a 13 year porn addiction. My brain was developing while I watched brutal porn videos where women and men were degraded and treated like animals. To explain to you all in further detail of what many porn videos show here are some real titles of porn videos online today, I retrieved these titles on 1/1/2026:

Quote: " She is not allowed to say no!"

Quote: " Teen tided up for the first time."

Quote: " She loves being used like a piece of meat."

Quote: " Perverted church priest uses an fucks married wife who came to confess"

Quote: " Disobedient Muslim whore"

Quote: " Had to be aggressive with her dumb ass"

Quote: " He made me suck his dick and I choked"

Quote: " Slap and fuck his face like a sex doll- gag the fag"

This is just scratching the surface of the videos produced in the porn industry. It was videos like these that were teaching me who I was and how myself and others should behave within relationships. The porn industry taught me that I was an object, that being hit, degraded and used is not only normal, but a turn on. That if I do not consent that is okay, because I am just an object of pleasure. The porn industry lies to us and tells us that we can learn about sex and sexual preferences by watching porn. Porn is not a healthy form of sexual education. Porn normalizes violence and abuse. Studies show that 10-15 year olds who watch porn are 5 times

more likely to become sexually aggressive, or victims of sexual abuse. It was porn that led me into a toxic view of myself and sex. It was porn that desensitized me to sexual abuse and violence. I remember being 8 years old and feeling like something was deeply wrong with me. I had this pit in my stomach and I could never seem to get it to go away. As I got older and processed what had happened to me I learned that pit was shame. The weight of shame was caused directly from the pornography I had consumed. The shame was heavy and altered my life deeply. I was 11 years old when I started self harming to then later be hospitalized in a psychiatric ward due to extreme self harm and wanting to commit suicide. I went to countless therapy appointments and they would always ask the same thing "what happened to you that caused you to want to self harm, why do you want to kill yourself?" I pondered this question for years, struggling secretly with a porn addiction that I felt too much shame to admit, I always responded with "I don't know." But it was porn. Porn caused me to hate my body, question my worth, isolate myself from others and consume violent graphic content until I felt sick to my stomach. I was diagnosed with anxiety and depression at 11 years old. I had an on going eating disorder from ages 12-20. The string of mental health issues I was facing were rooted in my pornography addiction. Porn stole my innocence and polluted my mind. Creating a dark reality that almost took my life. When I was 16 years old I was sexually assaulted. I remember making it home and running into my bedroom afterwards, looking at myself in the mirror and pulling my lip down, the inside of my mouth was purple with bruises. I was shaking and crying. And I thought to myself " But this is just like porn, that experience was just like porn. I'm supposed to want and like this. I said no, but what does that really mean?" This mindset was brought on by porn and had desensitized me to abuse and sexual violence. It was this mindset that told me to stay in a relationship with my abuser, because my 'no' could never actually mean 'no.' I was simply an object, my desires have no real meaning. This is what the porn industry teaches. This is what was ingrained in my brain at seven years old. I was fulfilling the role porn taught me to be. I was in that abusive relationship from 16-18 years old. It wasn't until I took a mandatory title 9 training in college that I learned I had been assaulted multiple times, and that I was being abused. Porn had made abuse so normal to me that I did not even know that was what was actively happening to me. I truly thought it was normal, that even though I was miserable and in so much pain, that is just my place as a woman. Porn took my childhood away from me. Sometimes people try to stray away from saying statements like that, in an attempt to be hopeful or avoid negativity. But it is true. Porn took my childhood away from me. And that is sad. And I am hopeful. I am married to the love of my life, 10 years clean from self harm, 5 years sober from porn. And I am hopeful. I am hopeful that porn will become restricted, that age verification will be a requirement, that the upcoming generation, my future children will grow up with adults who chose to protect them. There is no place for children within the porn industry. If these sites had age verification my life would look extremely different and I would not have endured the pain and struggle that I experienced. I should have never had the access that I did to porn, and I am telling you today that age verification is an utter most necessity to protecting children and preventing stories like mine. Porn preys on the minds of children and young people with no attempt to protect them, but rather make profit despite their innocence. Political party & religious beliefs aside, porn is not for children. This is an area we can truly be unified in as a people. If we are continuing to categorize porn as "adult content" then it needs to be separated as such, and access should not be a click away. I am writing this urging you to stand on the right side of history, closing to fight for age verification on porn sites. For my younger self and the children of the upcoming generation, age verification is a necessity.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>TAYLOR MUTHOKA</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/8/2026 12:41 PM</b>	

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I was only seven years old the first time I was exposed to pornography. My friend came over for a sleepover and wanted to show me what she had accidentally found on her device. All we needed to watch this content was to check a box claiming we were eighteen, and within seconds, I was dragged into a world I was far too young to see or understand.

But what I saw was not just explicit images. It was violent. It was abusive. It was filled with racism, homophobia, and the normalization of cruelty. Things children do not have the emotional or cognitive ability to process. I was just a little girl who cared about school, birthday parties, and ice cream. But my mind was so engrossed with the content I had been watching, I no longer cared about the things I did before. When I got older, I didn't know what healthy relationships and safe sex were supposed to look like. When boys objectified me, and touched me inappropriately, I let them. Because that's what porn taught me.

This is not just my story though. It is the story of countless children who are growing up in an internet age with unrestricted access to pornography.

And that is why I writing today urging the state of Missouri to pass House Bill 2921. Twenty-four states have already recognized this as a problem. It's time for Missouri to see it as well.

Checking a box that says "I'm 18" is meaningless and expecting parents or guardians to fully protect children in an internet-saturated world is unrealistic. Kids have access to phones, tablets, and computers everywhere. Placing the burden solely on families while the porn industry profits from their exposure is negligence.

If you care about protecting Missouri's children, then do not choose passivity. Thank you.



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<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>TIMOTHY FABER</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>In-Person</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/9/2026 2:40 PM</b>
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Good Morning, and thank you for allowing me to speak with you this morning in favor of HB1839; HB2921; and 3015.

22 States (AZ, AR, FL, GA, ID, IN, KS, KY, LA, MS, MT, NE, NC, ND, OK, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VA and WY) have already passed laws similar to these bills requiring age verification for access to online pornography . . . four of them just within this past year. This is because these states recognize a very real and vital interest in protecting their children.

Missouri attempted to pass this last year, in fact this committee voted 16-0 to “do pass” – and for that I thank you. However, the bill never got a vote on the floor of the House. Hopefully we can get it done this year!

Former AG Andrew Bailey established 15CSR 60-18 which would accomplish the same thing – except that rules do not carry the weight of legislation that is passed by the people’s elected representatives. Additionally, it is still listed as a “proposed” rule, not one that has been established, making this legislation even more critical.

Missouri also protects our children in many ways. There are age verifications and restrictions for alcohol, tobacco and vaping products, marijuana, gambling, . . . a minor cannot get a tattoo until they are 18 unless they have parental consent, nor can a person under 18 get married. Hopefully no one would think it is okay for a minor to view pornography but not get married.

RSMo chapter 573.020 and 573.040 already make it a crime to show pornographic material to a minor, or to hand them pornographic material. So if you or I were to hand printed copy of Playboy to a minor we would be guilty of a crime. If we showed a pornographic movie or pictures to a classroom full of kids we would certainly be arrested. The problem before us to today is that these pornographic websites are skirting the law by claiming they are not “providing” their materials to minors per se; but rather are putting them on the internet for adult purposes. The problem is, there is nothing to prevent a minor from accessing them.

So, one issue before us is whether such material is being “provided”, “promoted”, or “furnished to minors”; or whether it is merely readily accessible, and whether that is a problem. I believe it is a problem. Though a person may not “provide or furnish” marijuana or alcohol to a child, we expect them to block access of it from the kids. We must develop a way to block access to minors, not merely refrain from providing it.

The second issue here is whether such a restriction and age verifications are overly burdensome to the presumed free speech rights of commercial entities. Perhaps we could debate the very clear free speech rights of individuals compared to the less clear free speech rights of commercial entities. But we should save that for another day.

But along the lines of this being an undue burden on these enterprises, we have not found any of the above restrictions or age verifications to be an undue burden on any of those other products or

services, so why would they be an undue burden in this case?

For those who would argue that age verification tools are not as useful as some claim, that they can be manipulated or over-ridden . . . I don't know, I am not a tech guru. But this I do know A) if they are secure enough when the proponents of sports betting were trying to get that to pass, they should be secure enough for this; and B) Even if not the best means of restricting access for minors, it is definitely a step in the right direction. If we find that it is faulty, or insufficient in some way, way can fix it later, but we cannot leave the door wide open to causing harm for our children now. I strongly urge you to vote in favor of HB236.



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<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>2/10/2026 11:11 PM</b>
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**I am Opposed to this Bill. These Provisions Violate the First-Amendment of the United States Constitution and the Constitution of the State of Missouri. This responsibility shall be placed on all Parents and Legal Guardians of Our State to monitor and ensure that their children stay off of Adult Websites.**



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>KORTNIE HUDDLESTON</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
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EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2026 11:11 PM</b>	

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I raise concerns about privacy, censorship, and the stigmatization of sexual health. While protecting children online is a shared goal, this legislation employs a dangerous and ineffective approach.

The bill mandates extensive data collection through age verification, requiring users to submit sensitive digital identification or transactional data. This creates a significant privacy risk, establishing databases of personal information linked to adult website visits. Such databases are prime targets for breaches, exposing individuals to blackmail, discrimination, and identity theft. The prohibition on data retention is insufficient and unenforceable, failing to provide real protection.

The required warning labels are not based on comprehensive public health consensus. They promote a singular, stigmatizing view of sexuality, ignoring the diversity of human experience and the potential for ethical adult content. This state-mandated messaging undermines bodily autonomy and perpetuates shame, which is harmful to public health and LGBTQ+ communities in particular.

Furthermore, the bill's vague definition of "sexual material harmful to minors" invites overbroad interpretation and censorship. It could be used to target websites providing crucial sexual education, LGBTQ+ resources, or artistic expression, chilling free speech. The exceptions for news organizations are narrow and subjective, offering little protection for other vital informational content.

This model also places an undue burden on smaller platforms and creators, while empowering large commercial age-verification contractors. It does nothing to address the core issue of young people's access to technology, instead pushing for invasive surveillance that will ultimately fail while eroding the privacy rights of all adults.

We should pursue actual solutions that focus on comprehensive digital literacy education, empowered parental controls, and investment in social services—not surveillance and censorship that jeopardizes fundamental rights. I urge you to reject this bill.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>MICHAEL DREYER</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2026 11:06 PM</b>	

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

I raise concerns about privacy, censorship, and the stigmatization of sexual health. While protecting children online is a shared goal, this legislation employs a dangerous and ineffective approach.

The bill mandates extensive data collection through age verification, requiring users to submit sensitive digital identification or transactional data. This creates a significant privacy risk, establishing databases of personal information linked to adult website visits. Such databases are prime targets for breaches, exposing individuals to blackmail, discrimination, and identity theft. The prohibition on data retention is insufficient and unenforceable, failing to provide real protection.

The required warning labels are not based on comprehensive public health consensus. They promote a singular, stigmatizing view of sexuality, ignoring the diversity of human experience and the potential for ethical adult content. This state-mandated messaging undermines bodily autonomy and perpetuates shame, which is harmful to public health and LGBTQ+ communities in particular.

Furthermore, the bill's vague definition of "sexual material harmful to minors" invites overbroad interpretation and censorship. It could be used to target websites providing crucial sexual education, LGBTQ+ resources, or artistic expression, chilling free speech. The exceptions for news organizations are narrow and subjective, offering little protection for other vital informational content.

This model also places an undue burden on smaller platforms and creators, while empowering large commercial age-verification contractors. It does nothing to address the core issue of young people's access to technology, instead pushing for invasive surveillance that will ultimately fail while eroding the privacy rights of all adults.

We should pursue actual solutions that focus on comprehensive digital literacy education, empowered parental controls, and investment in social services—not surveillance and censorship that jeopardizes fundamental rights. I urge you to reject this bill.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
**WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM**

BILL NUMBER: <b>HB 2921</b>		DATE: <b>2/10/2026</b>
COMMITTEE: <b>Children and Families</b>		
<b>TESTIFYING:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>REGISTERED LOBBYIST:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>SAGE CORAM</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
REPRESENTING: <b>AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION OF MISSOURI</b>		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY: <b>ST. LOUIS</b>	STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>63101</b>
EMAIL: <b>scoram@aclu-mo.org</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2026 11:14 PM</b>
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MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
**WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM**

BILL NUMBER: <b>HB 2921</b>		DATE: <b>2/10/2026</b>	
COMMITTEE: <b>Children and Families</b>			
<b>TESTIFYING:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
<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>2/6/2026 1:45 PM</b>	
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House Bill 2921 remains constitutionally defective and legally indefensible, even in its revised form.

Removing ideological warning language does not cure the core problem of the bill: it still conditions access to lawful adult speech on compelled identification, invites content-based enforcement, and exposes the State of Missouri to immediate federal litigation.

This bill burdens constitutionally protected speech by requiring adults to verify their age before accessing lawful content. The Supreme Court has consistently held that the government may not restrict adult access to protected expression in the name of protecting minors when less restrictive alternatives exist. HB 2921 does exactly that by forcing identification as a prerequisite to speech, chilling lawful conduct and undermining the right to anonymous access to information.

The claim that identifying information will not be retained does not resolve the constitutional injury. The harm occurs at the moment identification is compelled. Forced disclosure itself is enough to chill speech, particularly for survivors of abuse, members of marginalized communities, journalists, educators, and individuals accessing content from shared or monitored environments. Constitutional protections do not depend on whether data is later deleted.

HB 2921 is not a neutral regulation. It targets websites based on the nature and proportion of their content, making it a content-based restriction subject to strict scrutiny. Laws that single out speech based on subject matter must be narrowly tailored to serve a compelling governmental interest using the least restrictive means available.

This bill fails that test. Parental controls, device-level filters, router settings, and user-controlled safeguards already exist and have been recognized by courts as less restrictive alternatives.

The bill also suffers from vagueness. It offers no clear or workable standard for determining when “more than one-third” of a website’s content triggers regulation, nor does it define what constitutes a “commercially reasonable” age-verification method. Such ambiguity invites arbitrary enforcement and selective prosecution, especially when paired with severe financial penalties. Vague statutes that chill speech violate due process and are routinely struck down.

The exemption for news-gathering organizations further underscores the constitutional flaw. By carving out favored speakers, the bill confirms that it is content-based and viewpoint-sensitive.

**If the concern were truly about access mechanisms rather than speech itself, such exemptions would be unnecessary.**

**If enacted, this bill will almost certainly be challenged in federal court. The result will not be increased safety for minors but injunctions, attorney's fees, and taxpayer-funded litigation defending a statute that conflicts with settled Supreme Court precedent. When legislators receive written testimony warning of constitutional defects and proceed anyway, the legal exposure becomes foreseeable rather than accidental.**

**Protecting children is a legitimate and important goal.**

**Violating the First Amendment is not a lawful means of accomplishing it.**

**HB 2921 does not strike a constitutional balance and should not advance.**

#### **Legal Authority**

**U.S. Constitution, Amendment I  
Missouri Constitution, Article I, Sections 2 and 8  
Reno v. ACLU  
Ashcroft v. ACLU  
Brown v. Entertainment Merchants Association  
FCC v. Fox Television Stations  
42 U.S.C. § 1983**



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
**WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM**

BILL NUMBER: <b>HB 2921</b>		DATE: <b>2/10/2026</b>
COMMITTEE: <b>Children and Families</b>		
<b>TESTIFYING:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>ABIGAIL HERNDON</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE:      ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2026 5:39 PM</b>
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**Why are there 3 bills covering the same topic with minimal differences in the bill text? Wouldn't one suffice and be less of a financial burden on tax paying constituents?**