



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2968		DATE: 3/4/2026	
COMMITTEE: Judiciary			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ARNIE C. "HONEST-ABE" DIENOFF-STATE PUBLIC ADVOCAT		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 3/6/2026 11:27 PM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

I am Opposed to this Bill and removing Counties within the State Statue. I am very Opposed to the Governor Appointing this Judge, that the Newly Created Seat be Elected by the Voters of Maries, Phelps, Pulaski, and Texas Counties.



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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: 3/4/2026 8:02 AM	

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HB 2968 proposes changes to the number of circuit judges in several judicial circuits across Missouri, including the addition of a circuit judge in the Twenty-Fifth Judicial Circuit and revisions to the statutory structure governing judgeships in multiple other circuits.

Missouri law already provides a structured, statewide method for determining when additional judgeships are necessary through the judicial workload formula established under §478.320, RSMo. That formula exists to ensure that expansions of the judiciary are based on measurable case volume, objective workload data, and consistent statewide evaluation.

When legislation authorizes new judgeships across multiple circuits, an important question arises: whether the affected circuits have been evaluated under the existing workload formula and whether the available caseload data supports the creation or restructuring of these positions.

Judicial expansion is a significant policy decision that affects long-term state expenditures, judicial administration, and the allocation of judicial resources across the state.

For that reason, decisions to add judgeships should be supported by transparent workload analysis demonstrating that the statutory criteria for additional judicial capacity have been met.

Before authorizing additional judgeships or modifying the structure of judicial divisions across multiple circuits, it would be important for the legislature to review the underlying caseload and workload evaluations supporting these changes and determine whether those circuits meet the thresholds established under §478.320.

Absent that analysis, authorizing additional judgeships through statute risks bypassing the uniform framework Missouri has established to determine when judicial expansion is justified.

For these reasons, HB 2968 warrants careful reconsideration.

Legislative Notice:

HB 2968 modifies the number and structure of circuit judgeships across several judicial circuits. Because Missouri law provides a statewide workload formula under §478.320, RSMo, designed to evaluate the need for additional judges based on caseload data and objective workload metrics, legislative consideration should include whether the circuits affected by this bill have been evaluated under that formula and whether the relevant workload analysis supports the proposed expansion.

Missouri already has a statutory system designed to determine when additional judges are necessary.

Legislative expansion of judgeships should follow that system rather than bypass it.



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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: 3/4/2026 12:00 AM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			