



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 3000		DATE: 2/9/2026
COMMITTEE: Special Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs		
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 "HONEST-ABE" DIENOFF-STATE PUBLIC ADVOCATE		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2026 11:41 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

I am in Support of this Bill. This Legislation makes a Audit-Petition for a State Audit of a Political Subdivision with a more accurate time threshold of a November Gubernatorial Election. A Audit is Needed to keep Elected Officials and Appointed Government Employees Honest, Accountable and Transparent. I would offer an Amendment that the minim amount of signatures Required for a State Audit Petition be at Two (2) Percent of the Last Election for State Governor.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: BRANDON ALEXANDER		PHONE NUMBER: 573-536-2012	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: STATE AUDITOR's OFFICE		TITLE: CHIEF OF STAFF	
ADDRESS: CAPITOL - ROOM 229			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65101
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2026 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: BYRON KEELIN		PHONE NUMBER: 314-402-0655	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: FREEDOM PRINCIPLE		TITLE: PRESIDENT	
ADDRESS: PO BOX 2			
CITY: BALLWIN		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63011
EMAIL: freedomprinciplemo@protonmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2026 6:05 AM	

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

We are writing in strong support of House Bill 3000 because it brings much-needed clarity, fairness, and transparency to the process by which citizens can request audits of their local governments.

In the wake of the massive Medicare fraud scandal in Minneapolis—a case that showed how millions of taxpayer dollars can be misused without sufficient oversight—it is more important than ever to ensure our local governments in Missouri can be effectively audited.

This bill streamlines and clarifies the process for petitioning an audit, tying signature requirements to clear voter counts, setting out specific cost disclosures, and providing proper avenues for individuals to participate and, if necessary, withdraw support. Importantly, by mandating the estimated audit cost be made public and requiring political subdivisions to cover the cost, HB 3000 ensures fiscal responsibility while empowering citizen oversight. With better tools to shine a light on local government finances, we can help prevent the kind of mismanagement and fraud that has harmed public trust elsewhere.

We urge the committee to pass House Bill 3000 to safeguard Missouri taxpayers and uphold the integrity of our public institutions.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: KAT CRAMER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2026 10:43 AM
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MANDY KING		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/8/2026 3:44 PM
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ABIGAIL HERNDON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/5/2026 6:36 PM
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This is trying to limit the people's power of direct democracy, petitions.



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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: 2/5/2026 4:01 PM	
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HB 3000 Converts a Right of Oversight Into a Pay-to-Play Mechanism

Missouri law has long recognized citizen-initiated audits as a check on local government misuse of public funds.

- HB 3000 undermines that safeguard by:
- Requiring petitioners to trigger a cost obligation on the very entity being audited
 - Allowing the state to seize funds held on behalf of the subdivision to offset audit costs
 - Creating a financial deterrent to audits regardless of merit

This structure discourages oversight by design, particularly in smaller or rural subdivisions where an audit cost can meaningfully disrupt operations and intimidate petition efforts.

Oversight that exists only when it is inexpensive is not oversight.

2. The Petition Thresholds Are Excessive and Disproportionate

HB 3000 retains or reinforces high signature thresholds (up to 25%) tied to gubernatorial election turnout — a metric that is unrelated to local governance participation.

- This creates:
- Artificially inflated signature requirements
 - Disproportionate barriers in low-turnout or off-cycle communities
 - Unequal access to audits across similarly situated subdivisions

Citizens should not be required to mobilize quasi-election-level participation merely to request a financial review of public funds.

3. Charging the Audited Entity Creates a Structural Conflict

Requiring the political subdivision under scrutiny to pay for the audit:

- Creates a direct incentive to resist, delay, or discredit audits
- Encourages political retaliation against whistleblowers and petition organizers

Undermines the independence of the audit process itself

HB 3000 mirrors the same structural failure seen in the General Assembly's recent "mandated reporter expansion" bills: lawmakers publicly claim to strengthen accountability while quietly constructing systems that chill reporting in practice. Expanding the list of mandated reporters while simultaneously failing to protect reporters from retaliation, non-response, or institutional suppression has already resulted in widespread underreporting. Likewise, HB 3000 purports to preserve audit access while imposing financial penalties, procedural hurdles, and retaliatory pressure that deter citizens from initiating audits at all.

In both cases, the legislature substitutes symbolic compliance for functional accountability, creating the appearance of oversight while ensuring that fewer reports are made, fewer audits are requested, and fewer systems are meaningfully reviewed.

A mandate without protection is not accountability — it is a silencing mechanism.

Oversight mechanisms must be institutionally neutral. When the cost burden is weaponized, transparency collapses into intimidation.

4. The Three-Year Lockout Shields Misconduct

The provision barring audits "by petition more than once in any three calendar or fiscal years" creates a safe harbor for bad actors.

If an audit:

Uncovers misconduct

Identifies systemic failures

Reveals incomplete or ongoing issues

...the public is statutorily barred from requesting follow-up review for three years — even when new evidence arises.

That is not accountability. That is statutory insulation.

5. This Bill Undermines the Constitutional Role of the State Auditor

The Missouri State Auditor exists to:

Protect the public interest

Ensure lawful use of public funds

Act independently of political pressure¹

HB 3000 reframes audits as:

Conditional

Financially punitive

Politically risky for citizens

That shift erodes public trust and narrows the Auditor's function from watchdog to gatekeeper.

Conclusion:

HB 3000 does not strengthen audits.

It discourages them.

It raises the cost of transparency, inflates procedural hurdles, and shields political subdivisions from timely review — all while claiming to preserve oversight.

A law that makes citizens think twice before asking "Where did the money go?" is not pro-accountability. It is pro-silence.

If the General Assembly truly supports transparency, it should not punish citizens for requesting it.

Future legislatures that value accountability should start by voting NO on bills that quietly dismantle it.

Footnotes:

Missouri Constitution, Art. IV, §13 — establishing the State Auditor as an independent executive officer.

Missouri Constitution, Art. I, §2 — inherent political power vested in the people; right to alter, reform, or monitor government.

Buckley v. Valeo, 424 U.S. 1 (1976) — government may not impose undue burdens that chill civic participation.

Boddie v. Connecticut, 401 U.S. 371 (1971) — access to governmental processes may not be conditioned on prohibitive costs.

Missouri Constitution, Art. III, §36 — appropriations and public expenditures must be transparent and justified.