



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 3359		DATE: 4/28/2026	
COMMITTEE: Higher Education and Workforce Development			
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: MELISSA A. COOPER		PHONE NUMBER: 573-208-0081	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: MISSOURI ALLIANCE FOR ARTS EDUCATION		TITLE: DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC POLICY	
ADDRESS: PO BOX 20			
CITY: MARBLE HILL		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63764
EMAIL: melissa.cooper@moaae.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 4/27/2026 5:28 PM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

To: Members of the Missouri General Assembly
From: Missouri Alliance for Arts Education
Date: April 27, 2026
Re: Support for the STEAM and Robotics Workforce Development and Innovation Act of 2026

Dear Honorable Members of the Committee,

The Missouri Alliance for Arts Education is writing today to express our strong support for the STEAM and Robotics Workforce Development and Innovation Act of 2026. This legislation represents a vital investment in Missouri's future by ensuring our students are prepared for the high-tech demands of the 21st-century economy.

By officially defining "eligible programs" as those registered with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), this bill provides a necessary framework for quality and accountability. Integrating Art into the traditional STEM model (STEAM) is particularly critical; it fosters the creative problem-solving and design-thinking skills that distinguish true innovators in the workforce.

Robotics and STEAM programs are more than just extracurricular activities—they are "classrooms of the future" where students apply theoretical math and science to real-world challenges. This bill will:

Bridge the Skills Gap: It creates a direct pipeline from Missouri classrooms to successful careers in engineering, manufacturing, technology, and the arts.

Encourage Statewide Innovation: By formalizing these programs through DESE, we ensure that students in both rural and urban districts have equitable access to cutting-edge tools.

Retain Talent: Investing in our students now encourages them to build their careers and businesses right here in Missouri.

The STEAM and Robotics Workforce Development and Innovation Act is a proactive step toward making Missouri a national leader in technical education and economic development. I urge the committee to vote in favor of this bill to empower our students and strengthen our state's workforce. Thank you for your time and for your service to the state of Missouri.

Sincerely,
Dr. Melissa A. Cooper, Director of Public Policy
Missouri Alliance for Arts Education



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SARAH WALDRON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 4/28/2026 12:00 AM
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BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: ARNIE C. A.C. "HONEST ABE" DIENOFF		PHONE NUMBER: 314-440-9000	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: STATE PUBLIC ADVOCACY		TITLE: STATE PUBLIC ADVOCATE	
ADDRESS: PO BOX 1535			
CITY: O'FALLON		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63366
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 4/28/2026 12:00 AM	
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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: 4/28/2026 7:40 AM	

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HB 3359 is what happens when you run out of real solutions and start packaging tax loopholes as “innovation.”

This bill lets corporations write off “donations,” turn them into tradable tax credits, and cash out —while taxpayers eat a \$10 million hole every year.

They even count employee hours as “donations.”

So now doing your normal payroll can qualify you for a state payout? Come on.

This isn’t about kids.

It’s not about classrooms.

It’s about building a state-sponsored tax shelter and calling it education.

If Missouri actually cared about STEAM, we’d fund schools directly instead of routing money through corporations and hoping some of it lands in a classroom.

This bill doesn’t fix anything. It launders responsibility.

Ten million in tax shelters while classrooms wait. Disgraceful.