



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
**WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM**

BILL NUMBER: <b>HB 333</b>		DATE: <b>2/10/2021</b>
COMMITTEE: <b>Elections and Elected Officials</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>REGISTERED LOBBYIST:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>JAMES HARRIS</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>573-761-7875</b>
REPRESENTING: <b>OPPORTUNITY SOLUTIONS PROJECT</b>		TITLE:
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CITY: <b>JEFFERSON CITY</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>
		ZIP: <b>65101</b>
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2021 12:00 AM</b>
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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>JOHN R. ASHCROFT</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>573-751-4936</b>	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: <b>MISSOURI SECRETARY OF STATE</b>		TITLE: <b>SECRETARY OF STATE</b>	
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CITY: <b>JEFFERSON CITY</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>65101</b>
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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>MIKE DEERING</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>573-499-9162</b>	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: <b>MISSOURI CATTLEMEN's ASSOCIATION</b>		TITLE: <b>EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT</b>	
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CITY: <b>COLUMBIA</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>65201</b>
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2021 12:00 AM</b>	
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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>ALICE BARBER</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE:                  ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>alice.woodward.barber@gmail.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2021 8:13 AM</b>
<b>THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.</b>		

My name is Alice Barber and I have been a volunteer on multiple ballot initiative campaigns. Helping to collect signatures has given me an opportunity to get involved in state politics and to make sure my neighbors are able to have their voices heard, too. Gathering signatures is not easy. On a good day—for example, at a well-attended weekend event in good weather—I might only be able to collect ten or twelve signatures in an hour. Most days are not as good. Once, when I was collecting signatures for the Clean Missouri Amendment, I stood outside the local DMV in the snow for three hours, until my hands went numb inside my gloves. I got about fifteen signatures. The ballot initiative process is already difficult. Volunteers spend long hours, often in adverse weather conditions, collecting ten or twenty signatures at a time, and they are not always able to get enough. When an issue does make it to the ballot, it can still be voted down. Whether the initiative succeeds or fails depends on the will of the people—because ballot initiatives are direct democracy in action. We cannot afford to make such an important tool of democracy less effective. I respectfully encourage you to vote no on this issue. We need the ballot initiative process to stay as it is so that the people can still have a fair say in our government.



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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: <b>ArnieDienoff@Yahoo.Com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2021 10:40 AM</b>
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**I am Opposed to this Bill! This Bill Silences Missourians by Disenfranching Voters and Defeats the Intension of Our State Constitution. This is a bad Bill and Squashes Citizens with Great Ideas to Make our State Better through a State Constitutional Amendment. There shall be NO Filing Fee or \$25 Per Page Fee. This is a bad Policy and Law**



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>BARBARA ## BEIER</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE:                  ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>bbeier4@gmail.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2021 12:18 AM</b>
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As a lifelong Missourian with roots in Saline County and a home in Jackson County, I know Missourians from all backgrounds want to make their own decisions, not have the government make decisions for them. I am proud that the authors of our constitution wisely included the ballot initiative process to give Missourians the means to do just that. Signature gathering is not an easy task, but listening to people's concerns and experiencing their enthusiasm for making their voices heard makes the hour of time it takes to fill a page of 10 signature worthwhile. Seeing those pages add up to place an initiative on the ballot, possibly validated by citizens' votes, brings back the memories of the stories from so many who did not think their voice mattered.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>BRIAN WINGBERMUEHLE</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE:                  ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>brian.winger@outlook.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2021 11:21 AM</b>
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Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. My name is Brian Wingbermuehle, and since 2017 I've worked to help advance issues I believe in through the initiative petition process. In 2019 one of the campaigns I worked on was Medicaid expansion. a team of 7 people collected more than 5,500 signatures to help get the initiative on the ballot. This number is only a fraction of the total 120,000 signatures that were collected by the larger campaign. Everyday we got up in the sun, the wind, the snow, and the rain, to speak to strangers on street corners all across the First and Second Congressional Districts. We waited on metro platforms for hours on freezing days being rejected by strangers, hoping for a few good conversations. I think you all probably have some idea what this is like, think back to your campaigns. It probably felt like a monumental task to see your win number. A Missouri State Senate District has an average of 164,000 residents. Imagine that win number multiplied by 34 for all 34 Senate Districts. To win the entirety of the State of Missouri. The most densely populated neighborhoods in St Louis to the most lonely country roads. The proposals being heard today would make the ballot initiative process prohibitively difficult, because the task is already a monumental one. The measure is retaliatory to the millions of voters who voted in favor of medical marijuana, ethics reform, medicaid expansion, and so much more. Missourians have spoken. They may be at ideological odds with some of you on this committee but that does not warrant you taking away their right to have a direct voice in government through this process. A NO vote is a vote to listen to Missourians. I urge you to vote NO today. Disclosure: While I am a registered lobbyist for NARAL, I am not submitting this testimony on behalf of NARAL, but in my capacity as a private citizen and resident of the State of Missouri.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>REGISTERED LOBBYIST:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>CARL BEARDEN</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>314-560-4597</b>	
REPRESENTING: <b>UNITED FOR MISSOURI</b>		TITLE: <b>CEO - UNITED FOR MISSOURI</b>	
ADDRESS: <b>PO BOX 2193</b>			
CITY: <b>JEFFERSON CITY</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>65102</b>
EMAIL: <b>carl@unitedformissouri.org</b>		ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/9/2021 8:37 PM</b>

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HB333 is a straightforward proposal to address the concern about the proliferation of initiative petitions (IP) submitted and the quality. The 2020 IP cycle saw less than one-half of the number of IPs presented as the 2018 cycle. Some changes are in order, but none of them should involve changing the Constitution. HB333 is on the right track with standardizing the IP form or increasing the fifty-word limit to one-hundred-fifty. If HB333 was limited to those areas; we would not be testifying in opposition to it today. But it isn't, and the bill has some issues. Section 116.050.2 -- Many IP submittals are simply variations of the same proposals. Since there are very few submittals that make it to the ballot, imposing a reasonable filing fee would discourage multiple variations. However, the \$500 cost is too high for citizens to address their grievances with their government. A couple of years ago, when this issue was hot heavy, a compromise of \$300 was reached. That should be the fee in HB333. Section 116.050.4(1) – The attempt to limit the IP process in specific ways is understandable. However, Section 116.050.4(1) is worded in such a way as to take away the same power from citizens that the General Assembly just exercised in Rep. Taylor's HB85 (SAPA). HB85 is a good bill, but there is a legitimate question that if it were to be applied to the General Assembly and considered under the language in this section, whether it would pass the test. The General Assembly should not take power from the citizens in this way. Section 116.050.4(1) should be re-written to clarify this position or eliminated. Section 116.270.2 – The establishment of the fund in this section is a good idea. It provides the SOS with a funding mechanism to address IP submittals without requiring General Funds first. However, a pretty consistent theme over the years, especially in tight budget times, is that unlimited funds often grow, sometimes disproportionately, and a bill to do "fund sweeps" becomes popular. The balance of this fund should revert to the General Fund every year following a General Election. Sections 116.2332.2 and .3 – these sections require the Attorney General to evaluate the IP submittals to ensure their compliance with Section 116.050.4. This presents the same problem identified for Section 116.050.4. The General Assembly should not take power from the citizens in this way. Section 116.050.4(1) should be re-written to clarify this position or eliminated. There is a lot of emotional turmoil within the legislative bubble that something should be done to "fix" the initiative petition process. There are "improvements" that can be made to the IP process as outlined in HB333, but none of them require a constitutional amendment to accomplish. None of the improvements should make the IP process virtually unusable by the Missouri citizens but readily available to those with money, as do many proposals to "fix" the IP process. We are about to celebrate the 200th Anniversary of Statehood. From the beginning, our state Constitution's adoption has only required a simple majority to adopt a WHOLLY NEW Constitution and adopt amendments to the Constitution requiring a simple majority. Our Constitution only requires a simple majority to call for a state Constitutional Convention. The SOS has often used a 30% turn out resulting in only 15% of the people making changes to our Constitution.

Proposals in the General Assembly, such as many of the subject HJR's, would raise the requirement to adopt an amendment to up the requirement to 60% or 66.7% (2/3's). Surely those levels would be a significant increase in those approving amendments. Not so much. If the requirement to adopt an amendment were to be increased to 60%, using the SOS' example turn-out number of 30%, a whopping increase of 3% (18% of the 30% turn-out) of the voters would be approving amendments to our Constitution. A requirement that 66.7% is needed to adopt an amendment would result in an additional 5% (20% of the 30% turn-out) of voters making that decision for all of us. These numbers tell us that it's not the percentage required to adopt an amendment that is the problem and, although well intended to be significant, are merely "feel good" efforts!

**BOTTOM LINE:** There is no valid justification to raising the requirement to amend a constitution that can be replaced with a simple majority vote or expanding the number of Congressional Districts! There is a lot of emotional turmoil within the legislative bubble that something should be done to "fix" the initiative petition process. There are "improvements" that can be made to the IP process, including some of the ideas in HB333. But none of the "improvements" require a constitutional amendment to accomplish. None of the needed improvements make the IP process unusable by Missouri citizens but readily available to those with money, as do many proposals to "fix" the IP process. Even increasing the percentage by which a measure must pass to be successful can be addressed with enough funds to run a campaign. Most Missourians do not share this bubble turmoil. When asked, "Knowing that these proposals are intended to make it harder for citizens to place measures on the ballot do you support or oppose attempts by the Missouri Legislature to make it more difficult for citizens to redress their government?", 63.8% of the respondents said they would be opposed to those measures. Our state constitution is often compared with the US Constitution and its requirements on how to amend it. Primarily, and especially lately, that comparison deals with how big our state constitution is versus the US Constitution. State constitutions should be larger than the US Constitution as states are the hub by which all government, both Federal and local, are created and supposedly to which both answer! There is indeed a lot of things in our state constitution that should be in statute. In many cases, issues like Clean Missouri, which was recently amended, and medical marijuana got into the Constitution due to the General Assembly's inaction. This fact doesn't make it right, but the people are hardly to blame for it. Fact is, we don't have a problem with too many IP's making it onto the ballot, but "we" do have several IP's making it on the ballot that "we" don't like!

Attached is a history of Constitutional Amendments from 1910 through 2020. Included is an analysis of the much-discussed 2020 IP submittals. The top half of the datasheet clearly shows that the IP process accounts for very few Constitutional amendments placed on the ballot, much less than those that pass. For example, since 1910, Constitutional Amendments placed on the ballot proposed by the IP process account for less than 23% of all proposed amendments. And of those offered by the IP process, almost 60% failed! Contrast Constitutional Amendments proposed by the General Assembly accounted for over 77% of all amendments with a 53.91% passage rate. In 2020 there were 148 initiative petitions submitted to the SOS. Three people accounted for over 53% of those submittals. Only NONE of those 76 submittals made it to the ballot. The 148 isn't a vast number compared to the past cycle and includes the fact many were minor variations of the same proposal. The alleged problem can be addressed in several ways, none of which require a Constitutional Amendment. But that's not the real story on the IP process. Of those 148 submittals, only 104 were approved for circulation. Eighty-seven of those were proposed Constitutional Amendments. And of those 104 (87 CA), 1 made it on the ballot. The 1 Constitutional Amendment represented less than 1% (0.68%) of the number submitted. We hear about the General Assembly's vetting process. The vetting process is accomplished in the General Assembly, but it is hardly a guarantee that the proposals are correctly written. Every year, there are one or more bills or amendments offered to correct bills adopted in past sessions because the vetting process failed to catch the errors. I reiterate that there are ways to address some of the administrative issues with IP's short of all but eliminate the process and be done without a Constitutional Amendment. Suppose the General Assembly wishes to eliminate the use of the IP process by citizens. In that case, it should propose an amendment to do so instead of proposing measures that result in the backdoor elimination. Constitutional Amendment Submitted to Missouri Voter, 1910 – 2020

Submitted by the General Assembly	Submitted by the People through Initiative	Approved	Defeated
131	28	Approval Rate	
53.91%	40.60%		
112	41	Defeated Rate	
46.09%	59.40%		
243	69?		
		Total Measures	
with >60%?		Fourteen (20.29%) of all ballot initiatives passed	
General Assembly proposals passed with >60%?		Sixty (24.69%) of	
proposals passed with < 60%?		Seventy-one (29.22%) of General Assembly	
		Nine (13.04%) of all ballot initiatives passed with >2/3's?	
Nineteen (27.54%) of all ballot initiatives passed with <2/3's?		Thirty-seven (15.22%)	
General Assembly proposals passed with >2/3's?		Ninety-four (38.68%) General Assembly proposals	

passed with < 2/3's\*Source: <http://www.libertytools.org/BillTracking/MO-Ballot-History.php> and  
SOS.MO.GOV

2020 Initiative Petition Cycle

All	Constitutional	Initiatives Submitted (1)	
148	**Initiatives Approved (2)		104
	87	Initiatives on Ballot (3)	
1	1	% of Submitted	
0.68%	% of Approved to Circulate		
0.96%	1.15%(1)	<a href="https://www.sos.mo.gov/default.aspx?PageID=9517">https://www.sos.mo.gov/default.aspx?PageID=9517</a>	
	**information not broken out on website(2)	<a href="https://www.sos.mo.gov/petitions/2020IPcirculation(3)">https://www.sos.mo.gov/petitions/2020IPcirculation(3)</a>	
		<a href="https://www.sos.mo.gov/elections/petitions/2020BallotMeasures">https://www.sos.mo.gov/elections/petitions/2020BallotMeasures</a>	



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>CARLY LANGLOIS</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>cj.langlois.cl@gmail.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>		SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2021 11:35 AM</b>
<b>THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.</b>			

My name is Carly Langlois. I've volunteered on signature gathering campaigns in recent years. It's important to me that this vital democratic process remain in place. The opportunity to directly contribute to legislation that matters to me has been crucial to my civic engagement. In an era where social media bubbles distort our differences, real life conversations on the street have proven to be meaningful and effective dialogues for me. Asking for a stranger's signature on a ballot initiative is not an easy task. There have been some days where signature gathering for me results in close to no responses, positive or negative. I've been belittled and berated not for sharing my opinion, but for asking for a moment of time. On better days and on more friendly corners, I've collected, at most, 15 signatures during a 4 hour shift. This is taxing and time consuming work. These proposed changes will make this work even more difficult for Missourians to remain involved in the legislative process. The work of our representatives should always be to bolster the will of the voters and a 'yes' vote is a vote to make it harder for the citizens of Missouri to exercise their rights. Please vote 'no' on these proposals.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>COLLINS F CHETWIN</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>cfchetwin@gmail.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2021 1:50 PM</b>
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My name is Collins Chetwin, and I have volunteered or worked on multiple ballot initiative campaigns. I have spent most of my time on campaigns after the signatures are already gathered, when we are talking with neighbors about the issues and working hard to convince them they should vote our way. Getting an issue passed is difficult work, even after the enormous number of signatures required to get them on the ballot in the first place. I've only gathered signatures for a petition once, but that was enough for me to understand the enormity of the undertaking. I stood outside an elementary school in Springfield, waiting for voters to exit so I could ask for a moment of their time. It was cold and windy. The location was pretty quiet for most of the day, as it wasn't a big election year. One voter would come by every five or six minutes, most would politely decline. I stood out there all day in the biting wind and I got maybe thirty signatures by the end of it. Honestly I was pretty disappointed, thinking that was a tiny amount compared to the thousands we needed. But when I got back to the office to turn in my signatures, the organizers were overjoyed. Signature gathering is a slow, incremental game, and every tiny gain was worth celebration. Gathering signatures for an initiative petition is a huge undertaking, but it's necessary for us to have the vibrant, participatory democracy that we deserve. The proposals being considered today would make the process harder to the point of being impossible. A healthy society depends on empowered voters, and raising the signature requirements or vote margin for passage does just the opposite. Those moves punish citizens for the use of the process we have to undergo to get our voices heard. A yes vote on this legislation is a radical move to undermine voters and consolidate power in state government. Legislation should never have the goal of repressing citizen involvement, but it is clear that these bills would do just that. I implore you to vote "no" on this bill.



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<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>FRANCES FARAH</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>franjac100@aol.com</b>		ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/9/2021 11:06 PM</b>
<b>THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.</b>			

To the members of the MO House and Senate. Please read my testimony below regarding the effort to change the MO Citizens Initiative process. Let me say right away that I am very proud of the fact that the MO Constitution provides direct access to the legislative process to its citizens, through the citizen's initiative amendment process . If Missourians feel that the legislature has not responded to an issue in a manner satisfactory to the people of MO we have the opportunity to draft a citizen's petition to amend the MO Constitution and submit it to the Secretary of State's office for his approval regarding the process, and the language of the petition. Once the Secretary of State's office reviews the language and makes whatever necessary amendments to the language, and the timing of the due dates of the petition for signature gathering completions, the petition signature gathering begins in earnest . These petitions must be signed by 150,000 to 300,000 signatories to insure that the number of signatures required by the Secretary of State is satisfied. All Signatures must be notarized by an authorized notary in the State of Missouri as determined by the Secretary of State. I have worked in campaigns that succeeded with enough amendment signatures to make it to the ballot in MO, for Voters to approve the issue, and sign it into law. Some of these are CLEAN MO, and RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE. I unsuccessfully fought against the adoption of Amendment 3 which was submitted to the Nov.3, 2020 ballot by only a majority of the Republican legislature. No tedious and multitudinous signature gathering was necessary to put Amendment 3 on the ballot adopted by the legislature. With Amendment 3, the legislature used their extreme privilege to override the will of 62 % of Missourians, and override Clean MO, by just a majority vote in the Legislature, after we had gathered over 300,000 signatures to adopt Clean MO and successfully send it to the ballot, where it was adopted by 62% of Missourians. The Legislature's Amendment 3 overrode the will of the people, without any signature gathering requirements. They do not need more legislated power to overthrow the will of the citizens of MO. We petitioners stood in the rain, in the heat of the summer sun, and the cold of the winter, and in social gatherings, and at grocery stores, and in festivals, and picnics, in parties and on street corners, and at parades and any place where people gathered to gather over 300,000 signatures. We wanted to make sure that our petition hit the ballot in 2018. We worked as volunteers, long and so hard, and we had to make sure that the signatures were good and that the signers were legitimate voters. We spent over a year to gather signatures for CLEAN MO. and to raise the minimum wage and to expand medicaid. We worked hard and played by the rules if the Secretary of State. We worked as citizens to get these citizens' petitions on the ballots for all Missourians to vote for, or against. In spite of all the difficulties we continued to get those signatures to make sure we had a chance at the ballot box. Remember all Missourians can express their preferences as citizens in this process. All parties regardless of political persuasions. Now you want to make this process even more onerous and unfair than it is already. Missouri is our state and we are its citizens and we resent the effort in the Missouri legislature to make it even more difficult, than it already is to exercise our rights, as MISSOURI

**CITIZENS. This is a matter of whether this Missouri Legislature wishes to keep the Democratic process open to its citizens, or close it off, as is the way of dictators. Consequently, I oppose the changes to the citizens', petition process. Open it up. Don't close us out. Vote these repressive bills down, and do the right thing. Represent the citizens of MO, not yourselves Respectfully submitted, Frances E. FarahFranjac100@aol.com 816-516-5858 11324 Greenwood Rd. Kansas City, MO 64134**



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
**WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM**

BILL NUMBER: <b>HB 333</b>		DATE: <b>2/10/2021</b>	
COMMITTEE: <b>Elections and Elected Officials</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>GENE DAVISON</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>gdliberal@aol.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2021 11:58 AM</b>	

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

Hello. My name is Gene Davison and I live in Springfield. I remember the first time I got to vote in an election. At that time, voting age was 21 years old and I remember the pride I felt being able to walk into a voting booth and cast my ballot. To be honest, I don't have any remembrance of what that first vote was for, and it doesn't really matter. I got to vote. I had participated in the democratic process. That mattered. It still matters. Since I first voted at age 21, I have never missed a local, state, or national election for which I had standing to participate within the voting jurisdiction. The pride I felt in voting, in participating, has led me to being a more active participant in the democratic process. I have worked on campaigns for both candidates and issues, and through that work have met some amazing people. I appreciate the work of elected officials, but more than that, I appreciate the fact that a person in Missouri does not have to be an elected official to have a voice in legislative matters. Many people have run unsuccessfully for an elected office, and despite losing have remained active in the political arena. Through the initiative process, all Missourians, not just legislators, have a direct voice in determining what issues our fellow citizens may choose to codify. For that reason, I have worked on signature collection for numerous initiative petitions and have signed petitions for others on issues they worked on, even those which I did not support. Why would I sign a petition for something I opposed? Because I believe in democracy and the right of the people to be heard, to petition for redress, and to let the people decide. Sometimes I was on the winning side, sometimes not. But the point is that initiative petitions are good. It is not easy to gather enough signatures to get on a ballot, and it would do a great disservice to make it harder. Each time I went out to gather signatures, I never knew how successful I would be. It's long hours, sometimes tedious, but always rewarding. It's not easy standing out in the cold of winter or the heat of summer, particularly on a person in their 70's as I am. I have experienced negative comments but also thoughtful discussions on the issues. I have welcomed those discussions because they show that we can find common ground and respect each other even when we have different positions. That's the best of America, and Missouri. What's not best for our state is to restrict the initiative process. As I said, it's not easy to get an initiative on the ballot. Most fail. Why make it harder? Every voter has a voice, and those voices are not always heard by our legislative body. Any change that makes an initiative petition harder to get on the ballot is an attack on the voice of the voters. The choice of who will represent you in the legislative body is important, but no less so than the right to make your own choice on issues that the legislative body fails to address. That is what the initiative petition is: a choice. To take away that choice by making it harder is an attack on democracy. That is a radical position to take, and one that is ratified by making initiative petitions more difficult. Missouri is the Show-Me state. Show me, and all of our citizens, that you respect our voices, and our right to petition, by voting NO on any and all legislation that would take away our voices, and our rights. I respectfully ask that you vote NO. Thank you.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
**WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM**

BILL NUMBER: <b>HB 333</b>		DATE: <b>2/10/2021</b>	
COMMITTEE: <b>Elections and Elected Officials</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>BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>JACOB HUMMEL</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>573-634-2115</b>	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: <b>MISSOURI AFL-CIO</b>		TITLE: <b>PRESIDENT</b>	
ADDRESS: <b>131 E. HIGH STREET STE. 100</b>			
CITY: <b>JEFFERSON CITY</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>65101</b>
EMAIL: <b>jakehummel@moaflcio.org</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/9/2021 12:03 PM</b>	

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

Missouri House of Representative Elections and Elected Officials Chair Representative Dan Shaul Honorable Representatives of the Committee, The Missouri AFL-CIO, the voice of working Missourians, opposes any legislation that would increase the signature threshold to the vote margin necessary for initiative petitions or constitutional amendments. Increasing the filing fee or adding additional cost to the process makes it harder for Missourians to exercise their rights. We believe this is another attempt to silence our fellow Missourians in the legislative process. Our founders, in their wisdom, built multiple ways the people of our state could act as a check on politicians, and hold their government accountable. And finally they gave we, the people, the initiative petition process; so that when necessary, the people could govern themselves directly, without the necessity of politicians acting as intermediaries. We respectfully urge a "No" vote. Jacob Hummel President Missouri AFL-CIO



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
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<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>JAHNAVI DELMONICO</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>jahnavidelmonico@gmail.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2021 2:15 AM</b>	
<b>THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.</b>			

Hello, my name is Jahnavi Delmonico and I have often volunteered my time collecting signatures for ballot initiatives, both successful and unsuccessful. I know first-hand that the effort, coordination, and perseverance required to put ballot initiatives to a vote of the people is enormous as-is. I can find no justification to increase that burden. Ballot initiatives represent the purest form of democracy available to us as citizens and constituents. No ballot measure has ever reached the voting booth without widespread support from Missourians. I and others like me from across the political spectrum have spent hours collecting signatures in inclement weather, have faced verbal abuse and disheartening animosity, and most importantly--have had engaging conversations within our communities about the issues that we see and the democratic process that enables us to address them. Whether we agree or disagree, direct voting brings the will of the people to bear on political proceedings that are often exclusionary. So, with our pockets full of pens and tissue paper to wipe our running noses on frigid mornings, we hit the streets time and again to have those conversations and raise our voices, together.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
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<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>JENNY</b>	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>Jennymihalesmith@gmail.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2021 11:32 AM</b>
<b>THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.</b>		

My name is Jenny Smith and I was a volunteer for the Clean Missouri initiative Petition campaign. The bar to succeed was very high but with the help of hundreds of volunteers devoting thousands of hours throughout the state, we exercised our rights as citizens of the State of Missouri. This bill was largely supported as was the Initiative petition to expand Medicaid and permit Medical Marijuana. These initiatives by citizens were necessary because of the ineptness of our Missouri legislature to act. Raising the bar for citizens to submit initiative petitions erodes the voice of the people and our democracy. Please recall that when John Ashcroft was our Governor he vetoed a bill similar to this bill before our legislators today. It was wrong to suppress the will of the citizens then as it is today.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
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<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>JOHN SAXTON</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE:      ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>Classiccarguy69@yahoo.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2021 10:32 AM</b>
<b>THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.</b>		

February 10, 2021 To Chairman Dan Shaul and Members of the Elections Committee: My name is John Saxton. I ran for the Missouri legislature as the Republican nominee in 2016 and served on my local Republican Central Committee to support responsible conservative government. I knocked doors for Sen. John McCain's presidential run in Branson (near my other home) because of his work to stand up for everyday Americans. That's also why I gathered signatures for a ballot initiative. I gathered signatures outside my local library. It was hard; I would get a few signatures in an hour. I'm 70 years young. I could only gather signatures occasionally, and when I did, many people wouldn't sign it. When they would sign, sometimes they wouldn't do it clearly, so it wouldn't count. But that's fine--these are the same rights we have had as Missourians for over a century, and we must not take them for granted. That is why I am dismayed that this proposal is trying to make it harder for people like me to make our voices heard. It's our patriotic right to petition our government. It's even in the First Amendment of our great country's federal constitution. This is an attack on our heritage and rights as Missourians. It takes thousands and thousands of red-blooded, hardworking citizens like me to get something on the ballot, and hundreds of thousands of people all over the state--rural, urban, and suburban--to sign it. And as you know, it doesn't always succeed. The legislature can just put something on the ballot. "We, the People" have to work much harder. This is an attack on all Missourians, trying to take away our rights. We will not stand for this. I stand with former Governor John Ashcroft. Democrats tried to limit the people's power of initiative, but Governor Ashcroft stopped it. He was right to stand up for his constituents, as I hope you will today. Please vote "no" on this proposal. Sincerely, John Saxton  
 Charles Park Ranger Former Republican Nominee for Legislature  
 Process for submitting testimony



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
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<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>LISA ANN WILLIAMS</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE:      ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>lwilliams2720@aol.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2021 11:58 AM</b>
<b>THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.</b>		

My name is Lisa Williams and I have collected signatures for several ballot initiatives over the last eight years. Some of these campaigns, such as raising the minimum wage, have been successful. Others, such as capping payday interest rates, were not successful. Regardless, I have found the process very rewarding every time. I believe it is an example of democracy at its best: citizens engaging with fellow citizens to decide for themselves which issues matter most to them and will be on the ballot for all to vote on. Over the years, while collecting signatures I have had many wonderful conversations with my neighbors about important issues and the democratic process. I have met people who would not even sign a petition because they are so cynical about the state of our democracy today and the chance for ordinary citizens to get anything done. But I am always surprised at how many of those very same people will nonetheless thank me for being out there trying to make a difference. I have even had conversations with individuals who would not sign a petition because they disagreed with the measure, but still would thank me for giving my time to engage others on that issue. I'm an introvert so approaching total strangers and asking for a minute of their time to discuss what I know may be a controversial subject does not come easily. I have collected signatures week after week in all kinds of weather from broiling hot July to bitterly cold February. We must always collect many more signatures than required because, despite our best efforts, invariably, some of the signatures cannot be used because they are illegible or invalid for other reasons. The proposals being considered today would make that process even more difficult, if not impossible, and are unacceptable. Raising the number of signatures required or the vote margin for passage are blatant attempts to stifle citizens' direct participation in our democracy. Governor John Ashcroft vetoed an earlier attempt by Democrats to pass such a bill saying it would "repress citizen involvement." I respectfully encourage you to vote "no" on these current proposals which would do the same.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
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<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>M'EVIE MEAD</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>3146047611</b>	
REPRESENTING: <b>PLANNED PARENTHOOD ADVOCATES IN MISSOURI</b>		TITLE: <b>DIRECTOR OF PLANNED PARENTHOOD ADVOCATES IN MO</b>	
ADDRESS: <b>4251 FOREST PARK AVE</b>			
CITY: <b>SAINT LOUIS</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>63108</b>
EMAIL: <b>mevie.mead@ppmissouri.org</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2021 11:04 AM</b>	

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

Wednesday, February 10, 2021 To: House Committee on Elections and Elected Officials From: M'Evie Mead Planned Parenthood Advocates in Missouri  
 mevie.mead@ppmissouri.org Testimony in opposition to HB 333 Submitted via House testimony submission system Planned Parenthood Advocates in Missouri opposes House Bill 333 because it imposes additional, unnecessary burdens on Missourians' right to directly petition one another. The current process to qualify a measure on the ballot through initiative petition is already extremely difficult requiring hundreds of volunteers to devote thousands of hours. Missourians have had the right to directly petition one another for changes to our laws and constitution for nearly 150 years. These measures are an attack on our history and constitution. Missourians of all political persuasions have used the process, oftentimes using it together to overcome legislative roadblocks. Initiative petitions require the signatures of between 200,000 and 350,000 Missourians while the Legislature can simply refer items to the ballot with a simple majority vote of politicians. All of these proposals attack citizens' rights to directly petition one another without reviewing the process through which the legislature places issues on the ballots. They are about silencing voters, not empowering us. In the midst of a pandemic without the protections of COVID voting options, lawmakers should focus on making voting more accessible rather than pursuing unnecessary, expensive and unconstitutional burdens on the right to vote in Missouri.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
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<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>MARGIE RICHCREEK</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE:      ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>mrichcreek43@gmail.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2021 3:51 PM</b>
<b>THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.</b>		

My name is Margie Richcreek. I've been an active citizen in Kansas City, Missouri for over 50 years - interested in and participating with government at every level from school boards, city councils, state legislatures, and Congress. The initiative petition process affects people on all these levels and is an important part of citizenship - for elected officials as well as the folks who vote. Through the years, I have gathered signatures on initiative petitions promoting legislation of concern and importance to me. It was a commitment to improving situations such as unfair interest rates on pay day loans or expanding Medicaid for thousands falling through the gaps in our health care system. That commitment meant standing outside a variety of places in a variety of weather conditions. That commitment also meant talking with a variety of people - a way of educating voters about the initiative petition process as well as the issue. Good citizenship is something we learn by participating - obeying laws, understanding how our government works, voting. The initiative petition process has been in place in Missouri's constitution for over a century and it should remain intact. Raising the signature requirements or vote margin for passage have nothing to do with empowering voters but are about punishing us for understanding the process. Please do not pass this measure, changing the initiative petition process and restricting Missouri's citizens, out of committee.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
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<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>BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>MELISSA VATTEROTT</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>3145810561</b>	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: <b>MISSOURI COALITION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT</b>		TITLE: <b>FOOD AND FARM POLICY DIRECTOR</b>	
ADDRESS: <b>3115 S. GRAND BLVD., SUITE 650</b>			
CITY: <b>ST. LOUIS</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>63139</b>
EMAIL: <b>mvatterott@moenviron.org</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2021 10:03 AM</b>	
<b>THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.</b>			

February 10, 2020 Representative Dan Shaul Elections and Elected Officials Committee Missouri House of Representatives 201 W Capitol Ave., Rm. 313-1 Jefferson City, MO 65101 Dear Chairman Shaul and Members of the Committee, The Missouri Coalition for the Environment is a statewide, advocacy nonprofit organization that works to empower Missourians to protect their environment and health. House Bill 333 seeks to weaken this power by creating unnecessary red tape in the initiative petition process. For this reason, we respectfully ask that you oppose HB 333. The most concerning aspect of HB 333 is the stipulation that a court-ordered change to the official ballot title will invalidate all signatures previously gathered on the petition. This gives the court system sweeping power to stall initiative petitions based on a technicality, as a change in the ballot title would not necessarily alter the content of the petition. In addition, HB 333 leaves it to the courts to interpret whether a change in the ballot title is "substantial," creating far too much ambiguity for this law to be applied consistently. Additional concerns include the text and formatting requirements for proposed measures. By requiring that measures be written in 12-point or larger Times New Roman font with no less than one-inch margins, HB 333 creates more technicalities through which initiative petitions could be unfairly invalidated. Similarly, HB 333 requires signatures to be written in black or blue ink, generating further barriers that are wholly unnecessary. Lastly, by creating a \$500 filing fee for initiative petitions, HB 333 establishes a deterrent that discourages the democratic process. Although this fee is refunded if the measure is certified for the ballot, the aforementioned technicalities make it impossible for the filer to anticipate if certification will occur. Additionally, a person regardless of their economic status should be able to participate in the democratic process of putting forth initiatives they believe will improve conditions in Missouri. The \$500 filing fee places a major barrier for low-income individuals, who are often in greatest need of policy reform to better their living conditions and economic opportunities. Once again, the Missouri Coalition for the Environment asks you to vote "no" on HB 333 in order to preserve the constitutional right of Missourians to engage in the initiative petition process without needless red tape. Thank you for your time. Sincerely, Melissa Vatterott, JDFood & Farm Policy Director Missouri Coalition for the Environment



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
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<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>MICHAEL BERG</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>314-644-1011</b>	
REPRESENTING: <b>SIERRA CLUB MISSOURI CHAPTER</b>		TITLE: <b>SIERRA CLUB MISSOURI CHAPTER POLITICAL DIRECTOR</b>	
ADDRESS: <b>2818 SUTTON BLVD</b>			
CITY: <b>SAINT LOUIS</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>63139</b>
EMAIL: <b>Michael.Berg@sierraclub.org</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2021 3:24 PM</b>	
<b>THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.</b>			

The Missouri Sierra Club opposes attacks to the Initiative petition process. Missourians have had the right to directly petition one another for changes to our laws and constitution for nearly 150 years. This is an attack on our history and constitution. Initiative petitions require the signatures of between 200,000 and 350,000 Missourians while the legislature can simply refer items to the ballot with a simple majority vote of politicians. This is no easy feat as is. This filed bill attacks citizens' rights to directly petition one another without reviewing the process through which the legislature places issues on the ballots. This bill is about silencing voters, not empowering us.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>PADRAIC MCGRATH</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE:      ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>padraicmc@gmail.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2021 10:59 AM</b>
<b>THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.</b>		

Missourians have had the right for almost 150 years to use the petition process to bring issues to the voters. I have personally given a presentation to a community group, collected 200 signatures, and distributed hundreds of yard signs. Sometimes these initiatives are successful and sometimes not. Taking away the ability of the people to directly bring an issue to a vote that the legislature may not be able or willing to address is unconscionable. We should all want people to be more involved in the political process, not less. Please do not take power away from average citizens. As a person of faith, I believe that being involved in politics is one of the ways that we can show our love for our brothers and sisters and to diminish that involvement is a direct rejection of what I am called to do by building His kingdom on earth.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>RICHARD G VON GLAHN</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>13145402049</b>
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: <b>MISSOURI JOBS WITH JUSTICE VOTER ACTION</b>		TITLE: <b>POLICY DIRECTOR</b>
ADDRESS: <b>2725 CLIFTON</b>		
CITY: <b>SAINT LOUIS</b>	STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>63139</b>
EMAIL: <b>richard@mojwj.org</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/9/2021 4:55 PM</b>

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

My name is Richard von Glahn and I have worked on multiple ballot initiative campaigns. No matter the campaign, I have enjoyed the opportunity provided by the initiative process to talk about issues facing Missouri with my neighbors. Some campaigns I have supported have introduced me to people I never thought I would agree with and helped build community with my neighbors. Every campaign has been difficult. While I have gathered thousands of signatures over the years, I would say on average I can gather about ten signatures in an hour. Oftentimes I gather outside museums, street corners or local festivals. Sometimes the weather can be difficult and I have had my fair share of rejection from people who either disagreed with what I was proposing or who simply didn't have the time to engage with me. The form can be frustrating and many signatures are illegible or just incorrectly done. It means we have to gather more. It is not easy. There have been campaigns I have worked on, including a campaign to cap the interest rate on payday loans, or a proposal to allow for early voting in Missouri, that I was not successful in. Hundreds of hours I poured into an issue only to see it not succeed. That is a risk with the current process in Missouri, one that has existed for over a century. The proposals being considered today would remove that risk and instead make the process impossible. Raising the signature requirements or vote margin for passage have nothing to do with empowering voters, but are about punishing us for our use of the process. Legislators tried this once before. But when Democrats attempted to constrain the process, then Governor John Ashcroft correctly vetoed the bill saying it would "repress citizen involvement". That should never be the goal of legislation, but it is clear that would be the result if these bills passed. I respectfully encourage you to vote no.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
**WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM**

BILL NUMBER: <b>HB 333</b>		DATE: <b>2/10/2021</b>	
COMMITTEE: <b>Elections and Elected Officials</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>RON BERRY</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>660-537-2239</b>	
REPRESENTING: <b>JOBS WITH JUSTICE VOTER ACTION</b>		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: <b>P.O. BOX 722</b>			
CITY: <b>JEFFERSON CITY</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>65102</b>
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2021 12:00 AM</b>	
<b>THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.</b>			



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<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 STARNES</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>starwal@aol.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2021 9:30 AM</b>	
<b>THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.</b>			

Greetings. My name is Sarah Starnes. I'm a retired social worker who has lived in Kansas City my entire adult life and worked for Missouri and federal governments and nonprofit organizations. In recent years I've gathered hundreds if not thousands of signatures on ballot initiative petitions, as a volunteer. I've also notarized the signatures of other signature-gatherer affiliates. While it is exceedingly difficult to obtain 200,000-350,000 signatures, as required of ordinary citizens--which is MUCH more challenging than a limited number of lawmakers putting something on the ballot--with enough everyday citizens doing the work over a sufficient period of time, we can petition one another to essentially petition our government through the ballot box, when our needs and preferences are ignored by those in power, regardless of which political party is in the majority. Sometimes our ballot initiatives win, sometimes they lose. That's the chance we must take. **WE MUST MAKE IT EASIER, NOT HARDER, TO ENGAGE VOTERS IN THE PROCESS OF CONTINUOUSLY MAKING THIS A BETTER STATE. PLEASE VOTE "NO" ON ALL OF THESE BALLOT INITIATIVE BILLS. THESE BILLS WOULD LIKELY BE CHARACTERIZED BY FORMER GOVERNOR JOHN ASHCROFT AS REPRESSING CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT**, based on his statement about a similar prior effort. I find the ballot initiative process to be the most meaningful and direct way for voters to engage in the democratic process, above and beyond voting, which does not necessarily require an understanding of any public policy. Signature gatherers must inform the voters signing a petition what it is they are signing and I encourage them to read the ballot language—which is facilitated when that is concise, straightforward, and understandable. Signature gatherers and petition signers can be affiliated with any party or no party. We do not talk about party affiliation when gathering signatures. Talking to strangers is not that easy for me, an introvert, but, as with other things, when it is for a worthwhile cause I am motivated to step out of my comfort zone and initiate conversation. When people are willing to talk—on the street at a parade, the sidewalk in a shopping area, a park during a festival, more than 25 feet away from a polling location--my faith in humanity is often restored. Most Missouri voters want to be civically engaged and are decent people motivated by kindness, even when they do not agree with my particular purpose for the conversation. (Which is not to say that some people aren't rude and grouchy, but I am usually able to not take it personally). The voters who are polite can warm my heart, even when it's bitterly cold and windy, or chill me out when I'm sweating in the heat and sun, gathering maybe 10 signatures an hour, on a good day. Please make it as easy as possible for citizens to engage in the ballot initiative process, a sacred and participatory right which we are, very fortunately, guaranteed by the Missouri Constitution. **I RESPECTFULLY ENCOURAGE YOU TO VOTE "NO" on the bills that would put up barriers to the ballot initiative process, radically changing our state's 150 year history of making government accessible to our citizens.** Thank you.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>SHELLEY SWOYER</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>sswoyer2002@yahoo.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2021 12:04 PM</b>	

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

My name is Shelley Swoyer, and I have worked on several different initiative petition signature drives over the years, and I can assure you it is not an easy process. I have stood outside in temperatures ranging from 30 to 100 degrees and in sun, snow, and rain. When I approach someone, I never know if I will be treated with rudeness or respect. I might be challenged or engaged in good conversation. Gathering signatures is a slow process and average s about 10 per hour. So why, if signature gathering can be so difficult do I continue to believe in and engage in the process? First of all, Missouri has a rich history of allowing its citizens to directly petition for changes to our laws and constitution. It's exciting to be part of the process allowing us as citizens to make our voices heard. Missourians of both parties have used the process. One of the most rewarding parts of the process is seeing how the electorate votes. When a ballot initiative wins by 50-60% of the vote, that means the issue is important to both Democrats and Republicans. It means that Missourians can often agree on an issue that matters regardless of politics. I also work on these drives because I strongly believe in the issues, and I know that those who will benefit most from them are not those in our communities who have the loudest voice. They have no lobbyists and do not usually engage in the process of contacting legislators. Not all of the drives have been successful yet raising the issues also educates the community. Although I have occasionally had an unpleasant encounter with someone, the vast majority of people are interested when you approach them to sign a petition. Many stop to visit and even if they don't sign the petition at time, they think about it and read about the issue to decide later. This bill would make what is already a difficult process almost impossible. The number of signatures required is already a high bar. Please do not cause this important tool of our democracy and our Missouri history be destroyed. Please vote NO on changing the initiative petition process. Thank you.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>STEPHANIE A. CLARKE</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE:      ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>morag.clarke@icloud.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2021 11:14 AM</b>

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

My name is Stephanie Clarke, I am a resident of Joplin MO; I brought my family up here and they are all bringing up their children (my grandchildren) here. I have a keen interest in their future which depends on Missouri being a diverse state with a thriving economy and a perception that democracy in this state is healthy and open. The Missouri legislature has been in the international news for all the wrong reasons recently, and our reputation as a state which does not promote the interests of ALL of citizens is deterring investment by corporations considering moving their operations here after the dislocation of the pandemic. This is detrimental to the future of my family. With this in mind, I was an active volunteer gathering signatures for Medicaid Expansion which should have been something the legislature should have done on its own instead of taking an overtly hostile political stance. I did not buy the affordability arguments. Many thousands of volunteer hours were spent gathering signatures and the measure passed with a large majority, indicating that the legislature was indeed out of touch with the citizens of our state. While the signature gathering was onerous, it provided an opportunity for me to discuss the topic with many individuals in Joplin and the surrounding area. More often than not, the reaction was very positive, sometimes I had to explain the initiative before a signature was agreed, and sometimes there was polite disagreement. Rarely was the reception hostile. But it was time consuming and I lost count of how many hours I spent gathering signatures. It was painfully slow despite our best efforts. I followed progress of others gathering signatures and it was easy to see how difficult it was to cover the required geographic area, and identifying events where people would be gathered, not to mention the formalities of ensuring that the signatures were verified and notarized. The national discourse around voter suppression is very disturbing and I am very concerned that the Missouri legislature as currently constituted may take actions to make it harder for Missouri citizens to vote, or have their voices heard in other ways such as ballot measures. I feel that the proposals in this bill will disempower voters and I cannot understand what is motivating it. Every act by our representatives in Jefferson City should be about making it EASIER for voters to express their needs, and this bill would only make that harder. I implore you to vote NO against this bill. Kind regards, Stephanie Clarke.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>STEPHEN DAVEY</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>srdavey@charter.net</b>		ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/9/2021 11:15 PM</b>
<b>THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.</b>			

February 10, 2021 To Chairman Shaul and Members of the Committee: I believe in freedom, and I believe many of you do, too. I have personally exercised the freedom to petition my government. I gathered signatures for a ballot initiative because I believe in a fiscally conservatives state with small government, and I stood up for those values. I stood outside during a festival. As people walked by, I asked them to sign a petition. It wasn't very successful. Most of them just kept walking, or declined to sign. That's OK—that's their freedom, too. The ability to exercise our own rights is what America is all about. And it's what our legislature should be fighting for. Here in Missouri, we are fortunate that our ancestors fought for the freedom to petition our government. It is not easy, but it is a freedom we are currently guaranteed in Missouri. It is a beautiful example of our first Republican President Abraham Lincoln's words: "this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the earth." This proposal must be viewed for what it is: an attack on our freedom. Our legislature should not be trying to take away our freedoms. Not an inch. It is already incredibly difficult, slow, hard work for concerned citizens like me—a father of three and small business owner—to volunteer to get something onto the ballot. Imposing additional burdens on the people of Missouri is the opposite of what many of you say you want to do. Gov. Ashcroft stopped the Democrats from doing this, and I believe you should stop this attempt, too. Years ago, I voted for Ron Paul because he stood up for liberty. As his son Senator Rand Paul says, "Freedom is popular. Bring it on." Those are wise words. I respectfully urge you to vote "no" on this proposal. Thank you, Steve Davey 844 Kiefer Trails Dr Ballwin, MO 63021 Owner, Big Step Marketing



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>SUSAN GIBSON</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE:      ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>Onesuegibson@protonmail.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2021 9:37 AM</b>
<b>THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.</b>		

**I oppose any legislation that would make it harder for Missourians to access direct democracy in this state and bypass the legislature when it refuses to follow the will of voters. I also oppose efforts for the legislature to hoard control over ballot language, bypassing the courts. .**



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>SUSAN KETURAH SCHMALZBAUER</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE:                  ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>sschmalzbauer001@luthersem.edu</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2021 11:45 AM</b>
<b>THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.</b>		

My name is Susan Schmalzbauer, I am a mother and seminary student in Nixa, Missouri. I have worked on numerous ballot initiatives in Missouri. Through the gathering of these signatures, I have had the privilege talking to thousands of Missourians about issues that impact our families: access to healthcare, a living wage, and our democracy. Missourians have had the right to directly petition fellow voters in communities for over one hundred and fifty years. This current bill is an attack on both our history and our constitution. Petitioning is not easy work. Each initiative requires between 200,000 and 350,000 Missouri voters' signatures, while all that is needed in the legislature is a simple majority to get an issue on the ballot. This process is important to our democracy and is used by Missourians of all political viewpoints. All the proposals up for review attack Missouri citizens' right to directly engage in the democratic process. These proposals will harm the citizens of our state. I have spoken to many voters in the Ozarks. They want their voices heard on issues that impact their families. Do not take away their voices by changing the petition process.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>TONY SMITH</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE:      ZIP:
EMAIL: <b>tpsmithster2442@gmail.com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>2/10/2021 11:43 AM</b>
<b>THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.</b>		

Initiative Petitions are a necessary instrument that must be readily available to citizens when their elected representatives fail to enact the laws necessary to protect the lives and liberties of the citizens. The bar is set very high for this process and sufficiently restricts frivolous petitions. If that bar is raised very important initiatives, such as Medicaid expansion would be prohibitive. We must retain our rights as citizens to have a voice in our governing when our legislature refuses to act on our behalf.