



## Missouri House of Representatives

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### **Missouri House Passes HB 2064 to Advance Justice and Modernize Civil Proceedings**

**JEFFERSON CITY, Mo.** – The Missouri House of Representatives has passed HB 2064, a comprehensive legislative package aimed at modifying civil proceedings across the state. The bill, which encompasses a wide array of provisions, aims to enhance various aspects of civil law, from workers' compensation to electronic estate planning, and beyond.

One of the most significant highlights of HB 2064 is the addition of mental health courts to the list of treatment court divisions. These specialized courts offer an alternative approach to addressing criminal offenses stemming from mental health disorders or co-occurring disorders. Advocates assert that mental health courts not only prioritize rehabilitation but also contribute to public safety by breaking the cycle of recidivism.

Additionally, the bill introduces several key modifications to civil proceedings, including:

- Waiving charges for birth, death, or marriage certificates requested by prosecuting or circuit attorneys, as well as the Attorney General.
- Amendments to workers' compensation laws, including changes to administrative law judges' removal processes and provisions related to compensation for permanent total disability.
- Authorization for law enforcement to tow abandoned or derelict property subject to civil forfeiture.
- Establishment of an alternative dispute resolution process for civil disputes.
- Introduction of "Bentley and Mason's Law," requiring individuals convicted of drinking and driving resulting in a parent's death to pay child support.
- Creation of the "Missouri Electronic Wills and Electronic Estate Planning Documents Act," facilitating the creation of electronic wills.
- Provision for guardianship petitions for minors with developmental or intellectual disabilities.
- Expansion of confidentiality provisions for misdemeanor offenses of deceased individuals.
- Repeal of the expiration date on the "Basic Civil Legal Services Fund."

- Amendments to juror pay regulations, including provisions for excusing individuals aged 70 or older from jury service.
- Establishment of civil liability protections for employers hiring individuals with certain convictions.
- Redistribution of funds for the public defender's office to support local offices.

The passage of HB 2064 underscores Missouri's commitment to modernizing its legal framework to better serve its citizens. By addressing a wide range of civil proceedings, the bill aims to streamline processes, enhance protections, and promote justice throughout the state.

"This bill represents a significant step forward in modernizing our civil proceedings and addressing crucial issues within our legal system," Rep. Black, R-Marshfield, said. "By introducing mental health courts and implementing reforms across various areas of civil law, we are prioritizing rehabilitation, promoting public safety, and ensuring that our legal framework serves the needs of all Missourians."

"The passage of HB 2064 is a testament to the dedication and hard work of our legislators in addressing the evolving needs of our state. This bill encompasses a wide range of provisions aimed at improving civil proceedings, from enhancing access to essential documents to establishing protections for vulnerable populations," House Speaker Dean Plocher, R-Des Peres, said. "I commend the efforts of Rep. John Black and all those involved in crafting this legislation. By enacting these reforms, we are strengthening our legal system and working towards a fairer and more just Missouri for all."

The bill now awaits further consideration in the Missouri Senate, where its provisions will be evaluated for their potential impact on the state's legal landscape.

*Representative John Black, a Republican, represents Webster County (District 129) in the Missouri House of Representatives. He was elected to his first two-year term in November 2018. For more information, please contact Rep. Black's office at 573-751-1167 or via email at [John.Black@House.Mo.Gov](mailto:John.Black@House.Mo.Gov).*

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