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Kimberly-Ann Collins

Minority Caucus Vice-Chair

State Representative, 77th District

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Collins Pushes Bill to Overturn Missouri's Wrongful Convictions

JEFFERSON CITY, MO – Missouri State Representative Kimberly-Ann Collins (D-77) has introduced House Bill 731, a legislative effort designed to allow freestanding claims of actual innocence in Missouri courts. The bill seeks to correct a significant gap in the state's judicial process, where individuals with clear and convincing evidence of their innocence currently lack a legal pathway to overturn wrongful convictions.

Under Missouri's current laws, innocence alone is not enough to overturn a wrongful conviction. Unlike states such as Texas, Oklahoma, and South Carolina, which allow incarcerated individuals to seek relief based solely on newly discovered evidence of innocence, Missouri law demands additional legal violations before such evidence can be considered. HB 731 seeks to align Missouri with other states that recognize innocence as a sufficient basis for post-conviction relief.

"Missouri cannot continue to let legal technicalities keep innocent people behind bars," said Representative Collins. HB 731 would remove procedural barriers that currently prevent courts from reviewing wrongful convictions and bring Missouri's laws in line with other conservative states that already allow such claims.

The bill has been referred to the House Judiciary Committee and is set for a crucial public hearing on Wednesday, February 26, where legal experts, advocates, and those impacted by wrongful convictions will have the opportunity to testify on its significance.

A champion of criminal justice reform and a tireless advocate for her community, Representative Kimberly-Ann Collins, who serves the City of St. Louis, is leading the charge to ensure that Missouri's legal system upholds fairness, integrity, and justice for all.

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