



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 355		DATE: 2/1/2021	
COMMITTEE: Higher Education			
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: JAMES HARRIS		PHONE NUMBER: 573-761-7875	
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CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65101
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/1/2021 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: Kaycee Nail		PHONE NUMBER: 314-630-5709	
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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: Kathy Schmidtke Felts, Ph.D.		PHONE NUMBER: (573) 882-6156	
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Madam Chair and Members of the Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on HB 355, the Informed Student Document Act. I applaud Rep. Baker's efforts to provide important information to prospective students and their parents when making hard decisions about whether they should go to college and, if so, which institution they should attend. Having high-quality information about Missouri's institutions of higher education is important in determining access, affordability, and opportunity costs of attending one school over another. I am happy to say that much of the information requested by the bill is already publicly available through several sources, including the Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development, the U.S. Department of Education's College Scorecard, and individual institutional efforts. For example, the University of Missouri – Columbia (MU) provides each student with an Invest in You brochure that goes out with every award letter and contains much of the requested information. In fact, providing clear and transparent information to students is required under our Code of Ethics and to maintain membership in the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA). Making decisions about if and where to attend college is an inherently difficult process, and no single document can fully capture that complexity. I worry that this bill may not only be redundant by becoming one more source among many, but that it may do more harm than good by attempting to oversimplify a complex set of laws, regulations, and significant variance across Missouri's public colleges and universities. In addition to larger concerns about the bill, there are some individual provisions of the bill that I believe would be difficult to implement and that would have questionable reliability due to the self-reported nature of the items. For example, to obtain self-reported job placement of students within the first three years of graduation and the self-reported income of college alumni over the first ten years of their careers, institutions of higher education would need to utilize the best contact information they have for alumni and send out surveys to request this information. Many alumni would find this request for income data cumbersome at best and extremely intrusive at worst and would not only be unwilling to participate but many withhold future giving to the institution as a result. The responses received may ultimately be misleading and not representative of student outcomes. In addition, the wide variability of surveys sent by institutions would further undermine the validity of the information students and parents would be referencing to make decisions. The bill also requests data on the average monthly student loan payment for all individuals attending public institutions in the state. Unfortunately, there is not currently a good source for this information. The best source is the College Scorecard, which provides information on graduation rates, salary after completing, fields of study offered, average annual cost, and other data. The Scorecard is easy to navigate, has an intuitive design, and allows for comparisons across institutions, which I believe captures many of the goals of this bill. One limitation

of the Scorecard is that it only includes data on federal loans, however, and attempting to capture a full picture through alumni surveys would run into the same barriers as collecting self-reported income data. Students and families are better served by doing independent research specific to their circumstances and career interests. Again, thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony. Rep. Baker's bill highlights the importance of prioritizing clear, transparent communication with prospective students to ensure they can make well-informed decisions, and the University of Missouri System shares a commitment to those priorities.



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WITNESS NAME			
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WITNESS NAME: STEPHANIE WILLIS		PHONE NUMBER: 816-679-2755	
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WITNESS NAME			
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WITNESS NAME: GERREN MCHAM		PHONE NUMBER: 573-533-8096	
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