



## **The Process of Passing Missouri's Reasonable Childhood Independence Law**

Let Grow is deeply indebted to Rep. Josh Hurlbert for bringing the reasonable independence for children legislation forward all the way to passage in Missouri. The bill was important to Rep. Josh Hurlbert as someone who has long been a policy advocate in the home-schooling arena. Home School Legal Defense Association and other home school organizations have been strong allies in Let Grow's efforts to add protections for children's independent activities, as homeschooling parents have been frequent targets of neglect calls. Let Grow supported his efforts, but he did all the groundwork and led the charge.

His work on the issue began in 2023 and nearly was successful that year. The bill he sponsored, H.B. 1904, was introduced on December 12, 2023, and was the result of Rep. Hurlbert's learning about Let Grow at the Excellence in Education National Summit in Atlanta. The bill was heard on January 30, 2024, with Let Grow's support and testimony, and it became a part of a package of bills in H.B. 2227. That bill passed the Senate Health and Welfare Committee on April 27, 2024, and moved on to the Senate floor. It passed onto the "informal calendar" on May 8, which included bills that were moving through by agreement of the legislators. However, a few hours before final passage was set to occur, the session abruptly ended without final action taken. This meant that the bill did not pass and Rep. Hurlbert had to start over in 2024-25.

He did so and this time, he met success. The starting bill he introduced was the 7-page HB 570 and it too was added into a package of bills which became HB 737 and 436. This now 66-page bill passed the House on a vote of 149 to 1. It passed the Senate on third reading on March 13 on a unanimous vote of 34 to 0 but then returned for a conference with the House and received a final vote of 129 yes, 14 noes, 1 no vote, and 18 abstained. (It is our understanding that the opposition in the final vote did not relate to provisions in our sections of this consolidated bill).

Governor Mike Kehoe signed the bill on July 9, 2025. While the bill does not state an effective date, by operation of law a bill cannot take effect until 90 days after the end of the session in which it was enacted, which was May 15, making this bill's effective date August 13, 2025.

For additional information see:

<https://joshhurlbert.com/f/let-grow-%E2%80%9Ckids-have-the-right-to-some-independence%E2%80%9D>

<https://reason.org/commentary/new-georgia-florida-and-missouri-laws-protect-parents-who-teach-their-children-independence/>

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/lifestyle/family/more-states-making-it-legal-to-play-outside/ar-AA1EROkf>