



Freedom Principle MO Succeeds in Permanently Removing Residency Requirement for St. Louis City Police As Missouri Legislature Approves SB 186

For Immediate Release

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The Freedom Principle MO succeeded in working with the Missouri Legislature in approving SB 186, regarding provisions relating to public safety. SB 186 contains the permanent removal of residency requirements for St. Louis City Police. The Freedom Principle MO brought this residency expiration issue to the attention of legislators and worked with legislators in the House and Senate to at least extend the residency requirement for St. Louis police and first responders. “Many of the legislators thought this issue was resolved in 2020 when the legislature provided the waiver in a bill passed as part of a special session addressing St. Louis crime,” said Byron Keelin, President of the Freedom Principle MO.

The Missouri Legislature passed HB 1604 in 2020 and part of the bill was to eliminate the residency requirement. The bill put a three-year sunset on the bill, as the legislature was relying on St. Louis City voters to amend the City Charter in November 2020. The charter amendment failed to get the required percentage to pass.

“The Freedom Principle MO would like to thank Representative Travis Wilson for his quick action on getting this amendment into this bill and others,” said Byron Keelin. “The residency waiver for St. Louis police is set to expire in August 2023. When we brought this to his attention, we were just seeking an extension to the residency requirement but, he immediately worked with the House leadership to get an amendment to permanently remove the residency requirement into several bills.”

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The amendment in SB 186 will permanently remove the residency requirement and allow any commissioned and civilian personnel of the police an exemption from the requirement of maintaining a residency in the city limits. The revision does require that any police officer would be required to maintain a private residency within one-hour response time. “The permanent removal of this residency requirement will open the doors to recruit police officers without having to force them to live in the city,” said Keelin. “We believe this will open the doors for a more diverse workforce and bring people who are committed to serving the St. Louis community.”

In addition to the residency requirement, SB 186 addresses provisions relating to other public safety and criminal justice reform issues. Among these issues include the office of child advocate, fees to the highway patrol, missing children, court fees for services, sheriff’s retirement fund, emergency medical services, and compensation for peace officers.

SB 186 passed in the House on Wednesday. “We support the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department, and we are always going to advocate on their behalf in Jefferson City,” said Keelin.

The Freedom Principle MO is a pro-citizen, pro-Missouri First organization. We are a membership-based 501(c)4 organization, acting locally and state-wide, to protect our families and our constitutionally protected liberties. We are fighting for America. We are fighting for Missouri. We are fighting for you. For more information about the Freedom Principle MO visit our website at www.freedomprinciplemo.org.

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