



SB 1008

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Path to full path: <https://www.senate.mo.gov/26info/pdf-bill/intro/SB1008.pdf>

Part 1 – Quick Snapshot

1.1 One-Paragraph Overview

SB 1008 restructures the Attorney General's staffing statute to create a formal category of **“commissioned investigators”** within the AG's office, giving them **full peace-officer arrest powers** in cases where the AG is appointed or assigned, and allowing them to assist other law-enforcement agencies when requested. These commissioned investigators must meet Missouri peace-officer standards under Chapter 590, take an oath, and receive a certificate of appointment filed with the Secretary of State. The bill also clarifies that the Attorney General may appoint both commissioned and noncommissioned investigators and set compensation for all staff (including investigators) within appropriated amounts, using state or federal funds. In practice, this bill enables the AG to build and control an in-house law-enforcement arm rather than relying solely on existing agencies like local sheriffs or the Highway Patrol.

1.2 Triage Table (Fast Flags)

- **Single-Subject, Title & Scope**
 - Title: “*...relating to investigators appointed by the attorney general.*”
 - **Title Specificity:** **3** (narrow and honest about the bill's content).
 - **Department Scope: Single** – materially changes powers/duties only for the **Attorney General's office**.
 - **Single-Subject / Fair-Notice Problem?** No – the title accurately reflects the bill.
- **Does it grow government?**
 - Yes. It **creates and formalizes a law-enforcement function inside the AG's office**, with its own commissioned investigators having arrest powers. This centralizes additional coercive power in a single statewide constitutional officer.
- **Impact on Missouri families (overall):**

- **Mixed / Leans Negative**
 - Potential upside: statewide tools to go after serious crime or corruption.
 - Risks: expanded centralized police-type power under a political office, potential for abuse or mission creep, duplication of existing law-enforcement roles.
- **Alignment with Act for Missouri core beliefs (high-level):**
 - **Mixed / Concerning**
 - Tension with limited, decentralized government and skepticism of concentrated enforcement power.
 - No direct life, education, or tax policy; this is a structural power bill.
- **Initial stance (before deeper review):**
 - **Oppose** (due to centralization of arrest powers inside the AG's office and risk of building a quasi-state police force under one political actor).

Part 2 – Purpose & Provision Map

2.1 Stated Purpose & Title

- **Title/structure**
 - Repeals and reenacts §27.020, RSMo, “relating to investigators appointed by the attorney general.”
- **Real-world purpose (plain language)**
 - The bill’s real aim is to **give the Attorney General a dedicated investigative staff with full peace-officer powers**, formalize their commissioning process, and clarify that their pay and expenses (along with other AG staff) can be covered out of state or federal funds appropriated to the AG’s office.
- **Title honesty**
 - The title is **narrow & honest**; a normal citizen reading it would expect the bill to define or expand investigators under the AG, which is exactly what it does. (Title Specificity = 3.)

2.2 Provision-by-Provision Map

Location: §27.020.1 (unchanged structure)

1. **Plain-language summary:**

- Reaffirms that the AG may appoint assistant attorneys general as needed, fix their pay within appropriations, and that they serve at the AG's pleasure after taking an oath to support the U.S. and Missouri Constitutions.

2. **Tag:** [Good / Neutral]
3. **Why:**
 - This is established practice; no major new powers—more a continuation of current law.

Location: §27.020.2 (unchanged substance)

1. **Plain-language summary:**
 - Allows the AG, upon request, to assign assistant AGs to represent and assist state officers, departments, boards, commissions, etc., and to reassign them as needed.
2. **Tag:** [Neutral]
3. **Why:**
 - Reflects the AG's usual role as the state's chief legal officer.

Location: §27.020.3 (reorganized)

1. **Plain-language summary:**
 - The AG may appoint a chief clerk, stenographers, typists, clerks, and “such other employees as shall be necessary” to perform the office’s duties. These employees serve at the AG’s pleasure. **“Investigators” are removed from this general staff list.**
2. **Tag:** [Mixed]
3. **Why:**
 - Neutral in isolation, but the removal of “investigators” here is a setup to treat them differently—segregating them into a new, more powerful class under subsection 4.

Location: §27.020.4 (new – commissioned investigators)

1. **Plain-language summary:**
 - Authorizes the AG to appoint **commissioned and noncommissioned investigators.**

- **Commissioned investigators:**
 - Serve at the AG's pleasure.
 - Must take an oath to support the U.S. and Missouri Constitutions and receive a certificate of appointment issued by the AG or designee; a copy is filed with the Secretary of State.
 - Are granted "**all the same powers of arrest held by peace officers**" to maintain order and preserve the peace in any matter in which the AG is appointed or assigned.
 - May assist law-enforcement agencies when requested.
 - Must comply with all peace officer standards in Chapter 590.

2. **Tag:** [Concern / Bad – structurally]

3. **Why:**

- This is the core power shift: it effectively establishes a **statewide law-enforcement arm inside the AG's office**, with arrest powers similar to any peace officer.
- While limited on paper to "matters in which the attorney general is appointed or assigned," that phrase is broad and can expand as statutes or cases assign more roles to the AG.
- Allowing them to "assist law-enforcement agencies when requested" invites mission creep and overlapping jurisdiction with local sheriffs and police, eroding decentralized law enforcement.

Location: §27.020.5 (compensation & funding)

1. **Plain-language summary:**

- Authorizes the AG to fix compensation for staff within appropriations.
- States that assistant attorneys general, the chief clerk, stenographers, typists, clerks, investigators, and other employees shall be paid in the same manner and time as the AG.
- Allows compensation and expenses of assistants, investigators, and other employees to be paid out of **any state or federal funds appropriated** to the department for such purposes.

2. **Tag:** [Mixed]

3. **Why:**

- Clarifies administration and pay, which is fine in itself.
- But combining **expanded enforcement power** with explicit access to state and federal funding makes it easier for the AG's office to grow and sustain a quasi-state police function with federal grant money. Federal money always comes with strings.

2.3 Changes to Existing Law (High-Level)

- **Creates a class of “commissioned investigators”** in the AG’s office with **full peace-officer arrest powers** in AG cases.
- **Separates “investigators” out from ordinary staff**, signaling a more formalized, enforcement-heavy role.
- **Clarifies the oath and appointment process** for commissioned investigators and requires filing their certificate with the Secretary of State.
- **Confirms they must meet peace officer standards under Chapter 590.**
- **Re-states and slightly reorganizes funding language** so that compensation and expenses for assistants, investigators, and other staff can be paid out of state or federal funds appropriated to the AG’s department.

Part 3 – Constitutional & Process Checks

3.1 Single-Subject & Original-Purpose (Art. III §23)

- **Main subject:**
 - Powers and structure of investigators and staff in the Attorney General’s office.
- **Additional subjects/riders:**
 - None apparent; all provisions relate to staffing, investigators, and compensation for the AG’s office.
- **Title clarity vs real effects:**
 - Title clearly signals that it is about investigators in the AG’s office; no hidden unrelated policy.
- **Citizen fair-notice test:**
 - A normal citizen would reasonably expect the bill to concern the AG’s investigators and perhaps their powers. The bill does exactly that (albeit in a significant way).
- **Title Specificity & Department Scope**

- Title Specificity: **3 – specific and honest.**
- Department Scope: **Single – only the AG’s office is materially affected.**
- **Original-purpose drift:**
 - No evidence in the text we have of major drift; it appears to be a single-purpose re-enactment of §27.020.
- **Conclusion:**
 - **Likely complies** with single-subject and clear-title requirements (though we can still object on policy grounds).

3.2 U.S. & Missouri Constitutional Rights

- **Right to life / equal protection:**
 - Not directly implicated.
- **Religious liberty / free speech / Second Amendment:**
 - Not addressed in the bill.
- **Due process & property rights:**
 - No explicit new seizure or forfeiture authority, but any expansion of arrest powers raises general civil-liberties concerns: more officers with statewide reach under a single political officer increases the **practical risk of selective or politicized enforcement**. However, the text itself doesn’t directly violate due process.

3.3 Delegation & Separation of Powers

- **Delegation to unelected bodies:**
 - No new independent boards or agencies; however, the AG (an elected constitutional officer) is granted broader **operational law-enforcement capacity** via commissioned investigators.
- **Centralization vs decentralization:**
 - This bill **centralizes coercive power upward**:
 - Moves enforcement capacity into a statewide constitutional office rather than relying primarily on local sheriffs and existing state agencies.
 - Enables the AG to run his/her own enforcement operations, potentially overlapping or bypassing local law enforcement.
- **Separation of powers:**

- Formally still within the executive branch; the concern is less classic “separation of powers” and more **concentration of enforcement authority** in a single statewide political actor.
- **Conclusion:**
 - SB 1008 **undermines Act for Missouri’s preference for decentralized, accountable law enforcement** by building a quasi-state police component under the AG.

Part 4 – Impact on Missouri Families

4.1 Economic, Tax, and Utility Impacts

- No direct tax or utility provisions.
- **Indirect impact:**
 - The ability to use **state or federal appropriated funds** to pay investigators and staff may, over time, contribute to **growth in the AG’s budget and headcount**, which ultimately is borne by taxpayers.

4.2 Family, Parental Rights, and Education

- No explicit provisions affecting:
 - Parental rights
 - Homeschooling
 - DESE or school mandates
- Any impact here would be indirect, via how the AG later deploys investigators (for example, in enforcement actions touching schools or families). Still, the bill itself does not specify such uses.

4.3 Moral & Cultural Climate

- No explicit language about life, sexuality, or cultural issues.
- The central moral question is **how comfortable we are with expanding state coercive capacity:**
 - If used well, it could help address serious crimes and corruption.
 - If misused, it could be turned against political opponents, peaceful activists, or ministries, especially given that the AG is a partisan elected office.

Part 5 – Act for Missouri Core Principles Check

1. Sanctity of Life (from conception)

- Neutral – the bill does not address abortion, preborn children, or equal protection.

2. Christian & biblical view of government (limited, servant government)

- Concern:

- This bill expands and centralizes enforcement power inside a single office rather than preserving a dispersed, locally accountable law-enforcement structure.
- From a limited-government perspective, it moves in the wrong direction by enabling a **more muscular, centralized enforcement arm**.

3. Property rights & economic liberty

- Neutral on its face, but any expansion of state enforcement capacity could be used later to enforce regulations, mandates, or economic controls more aggressively.

4. Constitutionalism & rule of law

- Procedurally, it respects single-subject and clear-title rules.
- Substantively, it **increases the potential for politicized enforcement** by giving a partisan statewide officer more direct arrest power.

5. Right to bear arms

- No direct interaction.

6. State sovereignty & Tenth Amendment

- Mixed:

- On one hand, building in-state enforcement could be seen as strengthening state capacity.
- On the other hand, reliance on federal funds for investigators risks federal grant strings influencing how these resources get used, aligning with concerns about federal leverage.

7. Nuclear family & parental rights

- No direct provisions, but expanded enforcement power can always be a double-edged sword if used intrusively.

8. Homeschool freedom & private Christian education

- No direct provisions.

9. Surveillance, data, and financial control

- The bill itself doesn't create new data systems. Still, any **new investigative arm is a potential future vector for expanded surveillance and data-sharing** if later statutes tie them into state or federal information hubs.

Summary:

- **Supports:** None of the core principles in a clear, affirmative way.
- **Violates/undermines:** The spirit of **limited, decentralized government** and wariness of concentrated enforcement power.
- **Overall:** Negative.

Part 6 – Special Topic Tests (2025–2026 Priorities)

1. Amendment 3 / Personhood & Equal-Protection Test

- No direct bearing on abortion, personhood, or equal-protection statutes.

2. Surveillance State & Digital-Control Test

- SB 1008 does **not** explicitly create digital IDs, databases, or hubs.
- However, **expanding an investigative arm within the AG's office** makes it easier in future sessions to plug these investigators into statewide or national data systems (fusion centers, data hubs, etc.), if later bills go that direction.

3. Utilities, Energy Policy, and Data-Center / Big-User Test

- Not applicable.

4. Federal Money & Strings

- Continues/clarifies the ability to use **federal funds** for AG staff, including investigators. This always raises the concern that policy priorities can be shaped by federal grant programs rather than Missouri citizens' wishes.

5. Globalism / Agenda 21 / Agenda 2030 Signals

- No explicit references.

6. Doula / Perinatal Support Program Test

- Not applicable.

Part 7 – Red Flags, Fixes, & Final Recommendation

7.1 Red-Flag List (Prioritized)

1. Red Flag: Centralization of Arrest Powers in AG's Office

- **Location:** §27.020.4 – commissioned investigators with full peace-officer arrest powers.
- **Why it matters:**
 - Creates a de facto law-enforcement arm under a partisan statewide official, overlapping with sheriffs and other agencies, and increasing the risk of politicized or selective enforcement.
- **Severity:** Serious / Critical (structural power shift).

2. Red Flag: Open-Ended Scope “In Any Matter” Where AG Is Appointed or Assigned

- **Location:** §27.020.4 – “in any matter in which the attorney general is appointed or assigned in accordance with the law.”
- **Why it matters:**
 - As statutes evolve, “matters” involving the AG can expand widely (consumer protection, civil enforcement, elections, etc.). This language effectively gives the AG’s investigators a **floating jurisdiction** that can grow over time without further legislative scrutiny.
- **Severity:** Serious.

3. Red Flag: Federal-Funds Backing for Expanded Enforcement Staff

- **Location:** §27.020.5 – compensation and expenses may be paid out of any state or federal funds appropriated.
- **Why it matters:**
 - Makes it easier to grow and sustain this enforcement arm using **federal grant money**, which often comes with policy priorities and expectations attached. This aligns with concerns about federal strings and centralized enforcement agendas.
- **Severity:** Serious.

7.2 Possible Fixes / Amendments

The purpose of this legislation is clearly to expand the power of investigators under the State AG’s control. This doesn’t increase the number of investigators. Centralizing power in a partisan office is never a good idea. Therefore, Act for Missouri believes no changes or amendments can make this legislation acceptable.

7.3 Final Recommendation

Act for Missouri OPPOSES SB 1008.

While the bill is clean in form and has a narrow, honest title, it substantially expands the Attorney General's authority to establish an in-house law-enforcement arm with full arrest powers, funded in part by state and federal funds, and operating in any matter where the AG is involved. This centralizes coercive power in a single partisan statewide office, increases the risk of politicized enforcement and mission creep, and conflicts with our preference for limited, decentralized, and locally accountable government.