



Bills target corporate home ownership

Missouri lawmakers want to limit absentee landlords in the state

BY STEPH KUKULJAN
St. Louis Post-Dispatch

A St. Louis state legislator is seeking to reign in corporate ownership of single-family homes in what could be among the first regulations for absentee

landlords in Missouri. State Rep. Marty Joe Murray, D-St. Louis, pre-filed legislation that would prohibit hedge funds, private equity firms, real estate investment firms, corporations, real estate asset management firms valued at more than \$100 million or companies that own more than 50 residential properties in the United States from buying or owning residential property in Missouri. The

bill, called the “End Hedge Fund Control of American Homes Act,” would require those investors to divest ownership within three years. The bill would not apply to nonprofit affordable housing providers, land trusts or public housing authorities. Apartment buildings with more than four units would not be included. State Sen. Rick Brattin, R-Harrisonville, near Kansas City, filed

a similar bill that would bar any company or its affiliate with more than \$50 million in net value or assets under management to own any residential real estate in the state of Missouri. Brattin’s bill also would empower the attorney general to force a sale of properties if companies are found in violation. Murray, whose district covers downtown St. Louis and parts of north and south city, said he has

grown concerned the American Dream may be out of reach for more people, adding that data from the National Association of Realtors shows the median age of a first-time homebuyer is now 40, the highest ever recorded. “When I see hedge funds buying up significant swaths of property, it incentivizes poor behavior,” Murray said. “The average

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SYDNEY | BONDI BEACH SHOOTING

AUSTRALIA MOURNS



MARK BAKER, ASSOCIATED PRESS

A woman kneels and prays at a flower memorial for shooting victims Monday, Dec. 15, 2025, outside the Bondi Pavilion at Sydney’s Bondi Beach a day after a shooting left at least 15 dead. For more, please see **Page A7**.

Online attacks target AG Hanaway

Coordinated social media campaign follows decision to seize \$24B in Chinese assets

JASON HANCOCK
The Missouri Independent

A week after Missouri Attorney General Catherine Hanaway announced plans to seize \$24 billion worth of assets owned by China as compensation for COVID-19, the online hate started pouring in. Hundreds of posts on X, formerly known as Twitter, in late November began questioning the attorney general’s competence and character, honing in on her defense of Missouri’s gerrymandered congressional map and crackdown on intoxicating hemp products. “She should be impeached and dismissed from her position as attorney general,” one post declared. According to investigators at the social media analytics company Graphika, the attacks were not an organic reaction to a high-profile and controversial announcement. Instead, researchers found they were part of a coordinated campaign, likely originating in China and conducted by fake accounts. A network of 105 inauthentic pro-China X accounts were involved, according to Margot Hardy, a Graphika intelligence analyst who was involved in the research and an expert in Chinese influence operations. About half of the accounts were created in November and December. Many display gaming or animation-related profile pictures, have few or no



Hanaway

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■ **Budget:** Hanaway seeks \$1 million more to combat crypto scams. **A3**

Columbia district sues state

Lawsuit aims to block charter school sponsored by St. Louis University

BY BLYTHE BERNHARD
AND KURT ERICKSON
St. Louis Post-Dispatch

COLUMBIA — The board of Columbia Public Schools

is suing the state to try to stop a St. Louis University-sponsored charter school from opening in the district. Frontier Schools Inc. wants to expand its Kansas City network to add an elementary school in Columbia as soon as fall 2026. The school would start with 184 students in preschool through second grade and add a grade each year to

grow to nearly 600 students by 2030. “To allow the unnecessary encroachment of a duplicate school district knowingly harms the successful students in Columbia Public Schools, with the Frontier charter school projecting to take more than \$4,000,000 in public dollars away from our local district in the first year

of operation and more than \$9,000,000 by year five,” reads a letter sent Monday from the Columbia board asking the Missouri Board of Education to reject Frontier’s application. Frontier STEM Academy would be the first charter school since a 2024 state law expanded eligibility for

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Son arrested after director Reiner found dead

Trump, on social media, blames killings on his opposition to president

CHRISTOPHER WEBER, MIKE BALSAMO
AND MICHELLE L. PRICE
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Rob Reiner’s younger son, Nick Reiner, was in custody Monday after being booked for what investigators believe was the fatal stabbing of the director-actor and his wife at their Los Angeles home a day earlier,



Nick Reiner

authorities said. It was not immediately clear what charges Nick Reiner, 32, would face. Online records show he remained in jail on Monday. Police Chief Jim McDonnell said he is being held on \$4 million bail. Representatives for Reiner’s family did not immediately respond to a request for comment

and it wasn’t clear if Nick Reiner had an attorney who could speak on his behalf. Nick Reiner has spoken publicly of his struggles with addiction. By 18, he had cycled in and out of treatment facilities with bouts of homelessness and relapses in between. Rob and Nick Reiner explored their difficult relationship and Nick Reiner’s struggles with drugs in a semi-autobiographical 2016 film, “Being Charlie.”

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ETHAN SWOPE, ASSOCIATED PRESS

A police officer blocks off a street Sunday, Dec. 14, 2025, near Rob Reiner’s residence in the Brentwood section of Los Angeles.

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Weather
Plan your week:
For a 5-day weather forecast for our region as well as the national outlook, please see **PAGE B12**

