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Missouri Supreme Court Decision Paving Way for Genital Inspections of Children by Public Schools is Being Challenged by ELM Law and MKQ Law

Landmark ruling dismantles sex discrimination protections for all Missourians

Kansas City, Missouri—June 20, 2025 – In a sweeping 5-2 ruling, the Missouri Supreme Court has effectively erased decades of anti-discrimination protections by redefining "sex" under the Missouri Human Rights Act (MHRA) as strictly "biological sex." The Court's decision reverses a \$4 million unanimous jury verdict in favor of R.M.A., a transgender person who is legally recognized as male who was denied access to the locker rooms and bathrooms while he was a student in the Blue Springs, Missouri School District.

The June 10th opinion marks a drastic shift from the Court's own 2019 precedent, where it held that the MHRA contains no qualifiers, biological or otherwise, on the term "sex." At that time, the Court affirmed R.M.A.'s right to bring his case. Now, it asserts the protections apply only to a narrow, biological definition – one so limited it effectively forces every Missourian to prove their "biological" sex in order to be protected under the law. The Court found a birth certificate insufficient to prove "sex," essentially requiring all members of the public, including children, to "prove" their genitalia to gain access to gendered restrooms and facilities. The potential for genital checks at public places—including schools – leads to concerning questions regarding public safety and privacy, especially for children.

"This ruling takes my lived experience as a trans man – of having to prove my existence as a male in everyday life, and applies it to everyone," said R.M.A. "No one should have to live under that kind of legal scrutiny just to access basic rights."

The consequences reach far beyond transgender individuals. The ruling opens the door for employers, schools, landlords, and businesses to discriminate, so long as they justify it by invoking "biological" distinctions. By hinging rights on narrow, anatomical traits, the Court invites invasive inquiries and strips protections not just from trans citizens, but all citizens.

The law firms of Edelman, Liesen & Myers, L.L.P. and Missouri Kansas Queer Law have been honored to represent R.M.A. as he has courageously fought – for over a decade – for justice and equality. Today, these firms are sounding the alarm.

"Missouri's statute is clear: all people are entitled to equal treatment in public accommodations without discrimination on the basis of sex – full stop," said Katherine Myers, attorney at Edelman, Liesen & Myers, L.L.P. "The Court's decision to narrowly define that term contradicts the law as written and turns back decades of clear precedent protecting Missouri citizens from sex discrimination."

Edelman, Liesen & Myers, L.L.P. and Missouri Kansas Queer Law are preparing a motion to request the Missouri Supreme Court reconsider their decision, which will be filed next week.

Concerned citizens, advocacy groups, and legal scholars are urged to monitor developments and speak out.

Media Contact:

Katherine E. Myers, Attorney for R.M.A.
Partner, Edelman, Liesen & Myers, L.L.P.

Phone: (816) 533-4976
Email: kmyers@elmlawkc.com
Website: www.elmlawkc.com/RMA

About Edelman, Liesen & Myers, L.L.P.:

Edelman, Liesen & Myers, L.L.P., located in Kansas City, Missouri, was founded in 2012 by attorneys Alexander Edelman, Sarah Liesen, and Katherine Myers. The firm has represented R.M.A. since 2014. Edelman, Liesen & Myers, L.L.P. primarily represents clients in state and federal courts across Kansas and Missouri in discrimination, harassment, retaliation, civil rights, and other employment matters.

About Missouri Kansas Queer Law:

Missouri Kansas Queer Law, located in Kansas City, Missouri, was founded in 2023 by attorneys Mary Madeline Johnson and Arden Pearson. Ms. Johnson, who is in her 20th year of practice, has represented R.M.A. since 2014. Missouri Kansas Queer Law is primarily dedicated to discrimination, harassment, and retaliation claims, and also serves the LBGTQIA+ community in other legal matters. Missouri Kansas Queer Law practices in Missouri and Kansas in both state and federal courts and can be reached at (816) 974-6575.

Photos and supporting materials available at www.elmlawkc.com/RMA

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