

# Doug Richey Extremism Spotlight

**Richey proposed a ban on diversity initiatives that even fellow Republicans slammed as disruptive, “unconstitutional,” “overly broad,” and likely to cause “billions of dollars in cuts to hospitals, health care facilities, colleges and universities.”** In 2023, Richey proposed a budget amendment to ban state spending on diversity initiatives. Gov. Mike Parson's administration said the proposal would cause major disruptions to routine government operations. The Office of Administration said it would conflict with laws encouraging women- and minority-owned businesses to participate in state contracting and was "unconstitutional in that it attempts to place substantive law within an appropriation bill." The Department of Social Services said it could cause problems working with faith-based foster care agencies and contracts for Medicaid providers. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education said the language could disrupt the distribution of funds to public schools. The Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development reported that it would have to end partnerships with organizations like the Missouri Chamber of Commerce. Richey's amendment was adopted by the House but ran into immediate opposition in the Senate, where Senate Appropriations Chair Lincoln Hough (R-Springfield) said he would be "taking that completely out." Senate President Pro Tem Caleb Rowden (R) wrote that Richey's language was "overly broad and would result in billions of dollars in cuts to hospitals, health care facilities, colleges and universities, and the Missouri House of Representatives itself." [Missouri Independent, [4/18/23](#)]

**Richey opposed bipartisan efforts to address Missouri's high maternal death rate, blaming women's "decision-making" for their deaths.** In 2022 and 2023, Richey was one of only a handful of lawmakers to oppose bipartisan legislation to address Missouri's 12th-worst-in-the-nation maternal mortality rate. The legislation, which received backing from both ends of the abortion rights spectrum, with support from Planned Parenthood and Missouri Right to Life, called for extending pregnancy-related Medicaid from 60 days after childbirth to a full year. Hard-right Republicans derailed the bill in 2022. Arguing that the state could do little to address postpartum health problems, Richey cited a report showing that substance use disorder contributed to 54 percent of pregnancy-related deaths. “We’re dealing with behavioral characteristics and decision-making on the part of others,” he said. “It’s disturbing — you don’t want to see a high mortality rate at all. But it’s really hard for the state to help women make the right choices.” The Kansas City Star reported that "such thinking ignores how systemic barriers to health care, and lack of providers and insurance, often block access to the help, such as mental health services, that could keep these patients alive." The legislation passed in 2023 despite Richey voting against it. [Kansas City Star, [6/1/23](#); [SB106](#)]

**Richey promised to "hold the line" against rape and incest exceptions to the state's abortion ban.** Richey, as a candidate for House speaker in 2022, said he would "hold the line" on not adding exceptions for rape and incest to the state's abortion ban. Missouri was one of a dozen states that forced women and girls who were raped and became pregnant to carry their pregnancies to term or seek an abortion outside of the state. Richey said, "the baby in the womb is ... innocent of any wrongdoing in what took place to bring about that child's existence." [Kansas City Star, [7/6/22](#)]