

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF MARIES COUNTY
STATE OF MISSOURI**

STATE OF MISSOURI ex rel.)	
ANDREW BAILEY, in his)	
official capacity as)	
Missouri Attorney)	
General,)	
)	
Plaintiff,)	
)	
v.)	Case No. _____
)	
CITY OF BELLE,)	
Serve at: 200 E. Third St.)	
Belle, MO 65013)	
)	
Defendant.)	

PETITION

1. The Open Meetings Law provides the public with critical tools to ensure that government remains transparent, honest, and efficient.

2. The Open Meetings Law declares that it is the State of Missouri’s public policy that “meetings, records, votes, actions, and deliberations of public governmental bodies be open to the public[.]” § 610.011, RSMo.¹

3. That policy of open meetings is to be “liberally construed and [its] exceptions strictly construed to promote [openness].” *Id.*

4. Despite the Open Meetings Law’s mandate of open and transparent government, the City of Belle has committed systematic and pervasive violations of

¹ All statutory references in this Petition are to RSMo as supplemented through the date of this Petition.