

SCS SBs 638 & 647 -- BENEVOLENT TAX CREDITS

SPONSOR: Romine (Engler)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Committee on Economic Development by a vote of 12 to 2.

This bill allows donations to programs that provide food for school age children to eat during non-school hours to qualify for the Youth Opportunities Tax Credit. The maximum amount of tax credits issued per fiscal year must not exceed \$500,000.

Currently, taxpayers may receive a tax credit for donations to maternity homes. The cumulative amount of tax credits that may be issued in a fiscal year is \$2 million. This bill raises the cumulative amount to \$2.5 million per fiscal year, beginning with the 2015 fiscal year. The bill also prohibits issuance of the tax credit after June 30, 2020.

Currently, taxpayers that make donations to a pregnancy resource center may be eligible for an income tax credit. The amount of tax credits that may be issued in a fiscal year is limited to \$2 million. This bill raises the amount to \$2.5 million, beginning with the 2015 fiscal year.

Currently, taxpayers that make donations to food pantries may be eligible for an income tax credit. The amount of food pantry tax credits that may be issued in a fiscal year is limited to \$1.25 million. This bill raises the amount to \$1.75 million, beginning with the 2015 fiscal year.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that this bill will increase the caps and extend the sunset clauses for existing tax credits. The tax credits encourage donations to pregnancy resource centers, maternity homes, and food pantries. The bill allows these organizations to leverage private donations to help people in need.

Testifying for the bill were Senator Romine; Campaign Life Missouri; Catholic Charities St. Louis; Jewish Federation of St. Louis; Missouri Family Network; Missouri Catholic Conference; and Missouri Right to Life.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that the majority of pregnancy resource centers misinform their patients and should not receive the tax credits provided for in this bill.

Testifying against the bill was Planned Parenthood Advocates of Missouri.