



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 350		DATE: 3/29/2023	
COMMITTEE: Elementary and Secondary Education			
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ALLISON LASSITER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: endurance121@gmail.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/27/2023 8:39 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

As a parent of three children and as someone who works in higher education and is completing a doctorate in education, I believe strongly that school choice empowers students to escape failing schools and is morally just. I watched a friend of mine lease apartments in better school districts and drive her three children to different schools to meet their educational needs because she lived in the Kansas City, MO school district. She is a Black business owner and single parent, but she jumped through remarkable hoops to give her children the education she felt they needed. As a former public school teacher, my experience in K-12 education and higher education confirmed that I wanted something better for my children. I worked in an affluent district teaching English but still found many of my students unable read at grade level, and their writing was such that they would likely have to take remedial instruction upon entering college. Writing isn't truly measured on end of course exams, you see, and as such, is pushed aside until teachers are no longer under the threat of exams. I currently teach college students learning strategies, helping to fill the gaps that their high school education left. These students come from a variety of backgrounds in wealthy and poor schools, with and without learning disabilities and language barriers. I want something more for my sons; I want them to love learning, to be challenged and to be prepared for college if that is what they choose to do. I work part time as an adjunct so the extra support of programs like MO-Scholars enables us to make this choice. I firmly believe it should not be something that is only for the well informed and that its reach should be such that all families can make the same choice if they desire. If we learned anything from the pandemic, it should be that schooling is on a precipice of change. Let's make that change one that remedies some of the inequity in the system.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: AMY BELLEVILLE		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: amybelleville35@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/27/2023 10:22 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

To whom it may concern! Please consider expanding the MoScholar Empowerment program. It has changed our life! My 2 daughters were awarded this scholarship and they are thriving because of it. We left a St. Louis City charter school and they are now attending Lutheran private school. The charter school we came from didn't have textbooks, never had spelling tests, huge class sizes. My 4th grader struggles with reading/writing and the charter school continued to say she was fine even though she was so far behind. Now she is getting extra reading help from the resource teacher and is improving so much. She is very shy and the smaller class sizes have helped boost her confidence and I am able to have an excellent relationship with her teacher. My now 9th grader never wanted to go to school. She said it was so boring and said she wasn't learning anything. She did NOT like the school. It was too easy for her. She dealt with a lot of bullying in her prior years which i addressed with the school and nothing was ever done about it. Now she is up early and ready to go to school. She loves it and is learning so much. She made honor roll with distinction this past semester and says everyone is so helpful and nice. I feel parents know what's best for their children and should be able to have a choice when it comes to their child's education. I am so GRATEFUL for this opportunity and would love for more families to be able to send their children to private schools. These children are our future! Please vote yes! Thank you for your time!



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: BECKI UCCELLO		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:		SUBMIT DATE: 3/29/2023 12:00 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: BENJAMIN PRITCHARD		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: benjamindouglaspritchard@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/28/2023 7:59 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

Thank you for supporting Missouri families and working to improve educational opportunities! I am writing today, to ask you to continue this great work by helping to expand the MOScholars scholarship program (also known as Empowerment Scholarship Accounts). While the program is only in its initial year of operation, MOScholars has already helped thousands of families find a school that fits their specific needs and helps their children succeed. My family has personally benefitted from this program in that it's given us more options to take control of where our daughter and son (ages 6 and 5) attend school, and what kind of experience they have. You can see some of their stories at <https://www.showmeschooloptions.org/moscholarsstories>. In the coming weeks, you will hopefully be considering a number of bills intended to expand this program to help more students achieve these successes. Some bills, like HB350, increase the amount of the scholarship while others expand the geographic areas where students can qualify or fix the existing language to make it easier for students with special needs to receive a scholarship. From my family's experience with this scholarship, it would be incredible to expand the available funds to impact even more families in our great state. Please work to pass any and all of these bills! The MOScholars scholarship program is a great way to give parents the power they need to ensure their children are learning in a safe and appropriate environment. Thank you again for serving our community and state, and thank you in advance for helping more parents take control of their children's education!



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: CHRISTEN COTA		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: newmamacota@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/28/2023 3:04 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

I am writing today to express my support for an increase to the MoScholars Scholarship money. This scholarship has changed our family's life. Having child with special needs brings with it many expenses. Expenses we are happy to sacrifice for the health and success of our child. This scholarship has made it possible for us not to sacrifice the type of education we want for our son in order to pay for other needed services. Through being able to pay tuition at a private school, it has also allowed private schools to meet the needs of students with a variety of needs, which brings inclusion to the school in amazing ways. The students at my son's school learn many life lessons from him, lessons they would not learn if the school was unable to meet the needs and therefore not enroll children with special needs. I thank you for your consideration of increasing the amount of the MoScholar's scholarship money.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: IZABELLA UCCELLO		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:		SUBMIT DATE: 3/29/2023 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: JAMIE MORRIS		PHONE NUMBER: 573-635-7239
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI CATHOLIC CONFERENCE		TITLE:
ADDRESS: 600 CLARK AVE.		
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65102
EMAIL: morrisj@mocatholic.org	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 3/28/2023 5:35 PM
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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: JEAN EVANS		PHONE NUMBER: 314-229-0827	
REPRESENTING: AMERICAN FEDERATION FOR CHILDREN		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 1614 AWARD DRIVE			
CITY: MANCHESTER		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63021
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 3/29/2023 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: KENNETH "BRYAN" MOHR		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: kmohr105@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/28/2023 4:20 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

My son currently utilizes the MO Scholarship program so he can get a religion based education, even though we are not able to afford the tuition. Having my son in private education gives me the assurance I need that he will succeed in school, stay safe, avoid bullying (at least in his elementary years), get more one-on-one with his teachers because of smaller class sizes, and be loved and respected by his teachers as a unique individual by teachers that hold the same moral values we do. Every family should have the opportunity to send their children to private schools if they desire to, without the financial stress. I am very, very thankful to have received the scholarship for my son. I am also in support of the "voucher" system so children who are already in school (not entering kindergarten or 1st grade) could take the money allotted their child for public school and use it for private school instead.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: LAURA LAKE, MS, CTR, CCRP		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: laurielake@wustl.edu	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/27/2023 6:08 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

My two sons, Garrett and Elliott are greatly benefiting from MOScholars scholarship program. Both of my sons are diagnosed with complex learning differences, including dyslexia. Both St. Louis city public school and our neighborhood parochial school was unable to support my boys. Today, Garrett and Elliott are thriving at the Miriam School, in Webster Groves, MO, as they benefit from an individualized education. This type of education is expensive. About \$40,000/year for each student. We sacrifice as a family to send our sons to Miriam and it is worth every penny. The MoScholars scholarship has been a much-needed partial relief from the high expenses that come along with raising children with learning differences. I urge the committee to expand funding for this wonderful program, in hopes more children can benefit from school choice and make a private education feasible for more families like mine. Thank you for working so diligently to improve educational opportunities for Missouri children! Investment in children's future is money well spent! Sincerely, Laura Lake, MS, CTR, CCRP, parent of two children who learn differently.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: MARY GARDNER-STAGE		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: outdoorblueinstl@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 3/28/2023 10:18 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

My children have benefited from this scholarship. As the price of everything goes up and my employment has declined income does not support all needs and we have been blessed to be able to continue to have our children attend catholic schools and have their needs met on all levels. More of us need help to keep our children growing into good upstanding citizens. Our children are our future.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MICHAEL FITKIN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: mfitkin1@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/28/2023 8:31 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

This scholarship has helped us be able to send our son to our school of choice Summit Christian Academy. This school shares our values and we wouldn't have been able to without it. I fully endorse and am in support of this bill.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: MICHELLE PRITCHARD		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: pritchardjmichelle@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 3/27/2023 5:56 PM
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This would help my family so much in providing an incredible education to our children. I highly support this program and it deserves support.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: OLIVIA UHL		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: uhl.liv@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/28/2023 2:52 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

My child received the MO scholars scholarship for this school year and it has and will continue to be an enormous help to our family. She is the youngest of 4, and it is our desire that our kids attend a school that reinforces what we teach them at home. Isn't that really what every parent wants? Mo scholars has made it possible.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: AMBER KEMPF		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: amberlkempf@outlook.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/27/2023 9:59 AM

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Stop trying to use taxpayer money to fund private schools. I should not have to pay for someone else's choice to send their kids to private school. You are stealing money from already underfunded public schools and giving it to people who can clearly afford to send their kids to private school.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ARNIE C. "HONEST-ABE" DIENOFF-STATE PUBLIC ADVOCATE		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: arniedienoff@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/29/2023 10:43 PM
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I am Opposed to this Bill. This is an unfair playing field and giving one sector of Missourians a better hand with Government Assistance. There being a Zero "Fiscal-Note" is incorrect and concerning. Leave the Formula as it is currently being calculated by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.



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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: BRANDT SHIELDS		PHONE NUMBER: 573-638-7501	
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION		TITLE: DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS	
ADDRESS: 2100 I-70 DR SW			
CITY: COLUMBIA		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65203
EMAIL: shields@mosba.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/29/2023 9:51 AM	
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MSBA opposes expansion of programs that expend state funds in private education without proper accountability.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: NANCY JONES		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: Nanjon777@hotmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 3/27/2023 12:17 PM
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This grants more money to people who are not interested in learning our language & could be used by illegals as the tests go through the school system. Giving people who don't care to learn our language is very offensive to give them MORE of our tax payer money. This is outrageous.



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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: RON BERRY		PHONE NUMBER: 660-537-2239	
REPRESENTING: AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS - MISSOURI		TITLE: REGISTERED LOBBYIST	
ADDRESS: PO BOX 722			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65102
EMAIL: ronalddberr@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 3/29/2023 8:15 AM	
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Oppose



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: SUSAN GIBSON		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: Onesuegibson@protonmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 3/25/2023 4:25 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			
No public money to private institutions!			



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WITNESS NAME		
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: CHRIS VAS		PHONE NUMBER: 630-673-9408
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: HERZOG TOMORROW FOUNDATION		TITLE: SCHOLARSHIP DIRECTOR
ADDRESS: 105 NW 188TH STREET		
CITY: SMITHVILLE		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 64105
EMAIL: cvas@herzogfoundation.com	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 3/28/2023 5:36 PM

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Hello, My name is Chris Vas and I am the Scholarship Director for the Herzog Tomorrow Foundation. The Herzog Tomorrow Foundation is based in Smithville, Missouri and we are one of the 6 EAO's working with the MOScholars program. I am not here to support or oppose this legislation, but wanted to provide some information about the impact that we have seen in just the first 6 months of this life-changing ESA program. From July-December, the Herzog Tomorrow Foundation was able to raise \$3.1M in tax-credits from 165 donors. We were able to turn those tax-credit donations around and fund 604 scholarships to students and families attending one of our 85+ secular and religious partner schools. Of those students, 122, or 20% were students with IEP's. 358 students, or 60% of our students qualified with an IEP, or were below the 100% income level of free and reduced school lunch. These 604 students were able to achieve their educational dreams. We hope to expand our impact to 720 students in year two of this program. These students are enrolling in a private school or out-of-district public school because their in-district option was not meeting their needs. Our families have a very high satisfaction level with their new educational option. This is evidenced by a 97.5% renewal rate for year two by our current families. We are participating in the program to help students. We believe that students deserve every chance at a quality education. Our state also benefits from these positive outcomes. Currently, public schools receive more funding for students that require a little bit more help to learn. This legislation would extend those same metrics to our students participating in the MOScholars program. ESA's have offered a lifeline to families across the state, and our hope is that the General Assembly continues to support expanded educational opportunities for all Missouri children.



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WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: SHERYL SCHMIDT		PHONE NUMBER: 417-616-1605
REPRESENTING: FAMILIES FOR HOME EDUCATION, INC.		TITLE:
ADDRESS: 239 ROCK COURT DR.		
CITY: MARSHFIELD		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65706
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 3/29/2023 12:00 AM
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