



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 1615		DATE: 2/12/2024
COMMITTEE: Special Committee on Education Reform		
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: CALEB GRANT		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 12:00 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		



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WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: CURT WICHMER		PHONE NUMBER: 573-635-7239
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI CATHOLIC CONFERENCE		TITLE:
ADDRESS: 600 CLARK AVE.		
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65102
EMAIL: wichmerc@mocatholic.org	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 11:39 AM

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The MCC supports intent of legislation to expand educational options to children in need of alternative educational opportunities.



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WITNESS NAME		
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: JEREMY CADY		PHONE NUMBER: 573-799-3277
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: AMERICANS FOR PROSPERITY		TITLE: STATE DIRECTOR
ADDRESS: PO BOX 94		
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65102
EMAIL: jcady@afphq.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 11:55 AM
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WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: JORDAN ZAKERY		PHONE NUMBER: 217-358-2741
REPRESENTING: EXCEL IN ED IN ACTION		TITLE:
ADDRESS: 1350 N. MERIDIAN STREET		
CITY: INDIANAPOLIS		STATE: IN
		ZIP: 46202
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: KATE CASAS		PHONE NUMBER: 314-809-5042
REPRESENTING: AMERICAN FEDERATION FOR CHILDREN		TITLE:
ADDRESS: 117 MADISON		
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65101
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: NATALIE HARRISON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: cwnrharrison@charter.net	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/11/2024 10:57 PM

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First and foremost, I want to say thank you to each and every individual who has contributed their time and efforts to get this program up and running for the families of Missouri. I want to also express my gratitude to the donors who are making it possible to provide these scholarships now for the second year. I think it's safe to say we've seen a decline in some of the public school districts of Missouri. My children were no longer able to go to school each day without dealing with many behavior disruptions in the class and fights at the middle school level. There was never any accountability and the children who were there to learn were suffering. My husband and I came to the agreement that we had to make a change for our children, but the cost of private school was more than we could afford with five children. We pulled them from public school in December 2021 and began homeschooling. Knowing that wasn't something we could do forever, we continued praying and looking for ways to be able to afford private school. One evening as I was scrolling I stumbled upon the Missouri Scholar program. The Lord had answered our prayers and put this right in front of me. I was so excited to read about it and started the application immediately. In the 2022-2023 school year my first and second born children were approved and our family was relieved of over \$6000 in tuition assistance. This was a huge blessing to our family and we finally felt like our children were in good schools that would help them excel. Unfortunately, at the time there wasn't enough room for my third and fourth child to enroll at the school their sibling attended. We continued to homeschool them for the 2022-2023 school year, which made them ineligible to receive MoScholars funds for the 2023-2024 school years because they were more than 6 months out of public school. However, this year as a new Kindergartener, my youngest was approved for MoScholars. As a large family, having \$19,000 of a \$35,000 tuition bill relieved made this financially possible for us. We are forever grateful to all of the people working behind the scenes to make this possible. Keep up the good work.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SCOTT WILLIAMSON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: TASHAYLA PERSON		PHONE NUMBER: 913-302-3098
REPRESENTING: YES.EVERY.KID / MISSOURI CENTURY FOUNDATION		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE: MO	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ZACHARY HARNDEN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: ADAM RAPERT		PHONE NUMBER: 573-761-5952	
REPRESENTING: STL PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT, MO RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOC, CO-OP SCHOOLS OF GREATER KC		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 215 EAST CAPITOL AVENUE			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65101
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ARNIE C.AC DIENOFF-STATE PUBLIC ADVOCATE		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: ArnieDienoff@Yahoo.Com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 11:57 PM
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: AUTUMN CHRISTI JONES		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: acjones86@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2024 10:33 AM

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I strongly oppose Homeschools being included in the MO Scholars program. If they could be removed, that would be best, until then, please oppose any expansion of this program. "Education is not the filling of a bucket, but the lighting of a fire." I would like to retain all freedoms we currently have. Thank you!



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WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: BRANDT SHIELDS		PHONE NUMBER: 573-638-7501
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI SCHOOL BOARDS' ASSOCIATION		TITLE:
ADDRESS: 2105 I-70 DRIVE SOUTHWEST		
CITY: COLUMBIA		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65203
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 12:00 AM

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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: CHARYTI JACKSON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: ecjackson622@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 3:21 PM
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Please remove homeschoolers from the Mo Scholars program. It doesn't take over \$6,000 per year to homeschool a child. Great homeschooling can be done for very little money. Even a complete curriculum from Bob Jones or Abeka is not \$6,000 per year per child. There are options for free homeschooling. Plus, there are already programs in place for families who do need financial help that have nothing to do with government strings. If you really want to help homeschooling families and Missouri citizens, cut taxes and let us spend the money the way we want to.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: DANIELLE DENT-BREEN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: dani.christine@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 12:22 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

I am a homeschool parent in my twelfth year home educating my two children. We have homeschooled from the very beginning of their education, and neither of them have ever attended public or private school. I am the president of Kansas City Homeschool Connection, a large 501(c)3 homeschool support group in the Kansas City area, representing over 1,200 homeschooling families. The school choice agenda that is currently being considered in our state is misguided at best, and dangerous at worst. We have many examples throughout the nation of other states that have enacted legislation similar to the MO Scholars program (and the other tax credit and FLEX School proposals) being considered this year. In each state that has gone before us, we have seen programs that were initially voluntary quickly devolve into calls and demands for more regulation and government control of all homeschool families regardless of their participation in the state funded programs. In Missouri, of course, we have a unique situation in that the MO Scholars program was designed in such a way to intentionally circumvent the Constitutional prohibitions against State funds being given directly or indirectly to religious organizations. As you surely are aware, MO Scholars funds are not "officially" considered to be State monies, as they are funded through the designation of certain taxpayers' tax liability to the private MO Scholars Fund. That said, I am opposing the expansion of MO Scholars in the effort to get more homeschoolers to submit to the control of the State. As citizens who were motivated to run for public office, I am certain that you place a high value on freedom and the autonomy your family enjoyed during your homeschool years. I, too, value those freedoms, and will fight as hard as I can to protect them for the generations of homeschool families coming behind me. As of this date, according to our Sunshine Request, only 14 homeschool students have chosen to receive MO Scholars funding. This shows that the idea is not popular among Missouri Homeschool families. We do not want funding. We do not request funding. It is completely unnecessary. But, I hope that you have had time to examine the Parent Handbook for the MO Scholars program, and you are aware of the requirements that are placed only upon homeschool families who participate. These requirements are outside of the Missouri Homeschool statute as established in RsMO 167.031, and place families under compulsion to comply. They include the following: 1. Mandatory Standardized Testing. 2. Registration of your homeschool. 3. Purchase of materials only from approved vendors. (No more Christian curriculum) 4. Approval of your lesson plans. 5. Requirement to produce your records and "open your books" at any time requested. 6. Mandatory criminal background checks on every adult over the age of 18 in the home. These requirements are unacceptable, and will inevitably lead to increased control and loss of freedom for all homeschool families in the state. At this point, the only way forward is to REMOVE a homeschool, or any school established under RsMO 167.031 as a qualified school from the MO Scholars program. We must protect ALL homeschool families from the overreach of big government. It will take courage on the part of legislators like yourself who understand just how valuable our liberties are and how important it is to maintain that our parental rights are not derived from the State

Legislature, from DESE, or from the local school district, but only from God Himself. I would welcome a chance to visit with you in more detail to explain our stance on this issue, and why as the bills currently read, I am urging you to vote NO on the expansion of Mo Scholars. The MO Scholars program unfairly discriminates against homeschool families with its restrictive rules and regulations that apply only to Homeschoolers. As of this date, only 14 homeschool families in the state have opted to participate in the MO Scholars program. As this lack of participation shows, homeschool families do not desire or need funding by the State, and we will not trade freedom for funding. But evidence has shown that in every state that similar legislation has been enacted, this initial voluntary participation has quickly been followed by calls for increased regulation of ALL homeschool families, regardless of their registration in the ESA program. This is more than a "slippery slope". We have evidence in several states that have gone down this path before us. Again, I would like to ask you to REMOVE a homeschool--or any school as defined in RsMO 167.031—as a qualified school in the MO Scholars program, as it requires compliance with rules and regulations that are outside of our Missouri homeschool statute. Thank you for your attention to this matter to protect the freedom of Homeschooling families in our state.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: DAVA-LEIGH BRUSH		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: MISSOURI EQUITY EDUCATION ON PARTNERSHIP ACTION		TITLE: PAL TEAM LEAD	
ADDRESS: PO BOX 1352			
CITY: ST. CHARLES		STATE: MO	ZIP: 63303
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 12:00 AM	
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: DAVA-LEIGH BRUSH		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: dems22blue@gmail.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 9:21 PM

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I oppose this bill.1. We need to keep public money for public schools. This bill is a foothold and it will not be long before the national forces behind this bill want more and more and more.2. This does not level the playing field for anyone. ESA/tax credits/vouchers lead to increases in tuition because it is really about school for some but for all.3. Boundaries matter. I live close to the St. Louis/Jefferson County border. I'd like some of the benefits of living in St. Louis County, but I do not have them. If we would put as much effort into improving neighborhood schools as we do into dismantling public education, we MIGHT just improve them to the point where zip code does not matter. 4. As a Missouri tax payer, I do not want any of my tax dollars subsidizing religious education, questionable science like Intelligent Design, or ahistorical propaganda like PragerU. The Constitution of Mo guarantees free public education. Taking tax dollars, even in the form of tax credits which could be put into the general coffers to fund the formula, seems like bait and switch at best and like it might require constitutional amendment. 5. Public school parents have expenses for school that are out of pocket. We purchased band software to assist in practice (volun-told), upgraded our internet to support various apps used at schools so homework could be completed, gifted summer camp, AP testing, PSAT study, field trips. Where is my tax credit?6. As a 25 year veteran teacher, I know that parents choose homeschool for a variety of reasons, some legitimate and some not. I have seen them do so to avoid truancy issues so the students unenrolls then re-enrolls until the next letter. Some did so because they needed childcare for younger children so dad could work and mom shop. Some families also homeschool so they can control access to the child because they know schools are filled with mandated reporters and want to avoid DFS visits. Sadly, good parents do not sparkle so we cannot tell. Having background checks might seem insulting and prickly to homeschoolers, but the reality is that parents, siblings, clergy, etc. are capable of grooming and harming kids. Additionally, homeschooled children are not always in school at home. They are part of co-ops with other adults. Either you want to protect kids or you don't. These bills have been copy/pasted from somewhere, maybe each other. So I'm copy-pasting this testimony to them all.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: EMILY HORNSTRA		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: emlife@att.net	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/8/2024 10:36 AM
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ERIN MCGHEE		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: GAIL GRISWALD		PHONE NUMBER:
REPRESENTING: AMORVINE		TITLE:
ADDRESS: 226 KADIE COURT		
CITY: LINN CREEK		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65052
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: HANNAH HUFF		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: hhuff08@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/10/2024 5:43 AM
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I would like to see home schoolers removed from these bills. They do not benefit home schoolers in the long run because they lead to more government regulations on homeschool. Please remove homeschool from the bills or oppose the bills completely.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: JERE HOCHMAN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: Jhstlny@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 11:18 AM

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OPPOSE THIS LEGISLATION Consider the impact on suburban districts AND rural districts. Consider Separation of Church and State! HAVE YOU TALKED WITH RURAL SUPERINTENDENTS? HAVE YOU REVIEWED FISCAL NOTES WITH THEM ON THE EFFECTS OF LEGISLATION? IF FIVE STUDENTS IN A RURAL DISTRICT HAVE A MEANS TO USE A SCHOLARSHIP NEAR THEM; THAT COSTS THE DISTRICT ONE TEACHER. A TEACHER CUT? THAT DOES NOT HELP AS YOU KNOW BETTER. THERE ARE OTHER WAYS TO PROVIDE CHOICE WITHOUT KILLING SCHOOL DISTRICTS, CREATING COMPETITION BETWEEN DISTRICTS HELPS NO ONE.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: KORTNIE HUDDLESTON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: kortniehuddleston@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 5:04 PM

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The Missouri Legislature is pushing a number of bills that make it easier for parents to send kids to non-district schools and take money from Missouri's public schools, which are already struggling for funding. These bills reinforce redlining and worsen education inequality. Many proposed bills expand the existing MOScholars program, which provides private (often religious) school scholarships that are funded by donations eligible for tax credits. SB727 (Koenig) allows families with higher incomes to participate. SB 1118 (Coleman), HB 1671 (Matthiesen), HB 1615 (Hudson), HB 1738 (Richey), and HB 2104 (Christofanelli) expand it so more students qualify. SB 729 (Koenig) directly defunds public schools by providing parents with a tax credit for not sending their child to public school. All of these bills funnel tax money away from public schools and into private schools, which are often run by religious institutions. History tells us the dangers that come from unregulated private religious schools, from the horrors of the Indian Boarding Schools to the recent abuse at Agape. Missouri has a long history of valuing quality education. Black Missourians in St. Louis docked a steamboat in the middle of the Mississippi river to create the Floating Freedom School and secure their education in the mid-1800s. German immigrants to Missouri in the 1800s made kindergarten a national standard. Unfortunately, we've gone backwards in recent years and now rank at the bottom of the nation in education due to misguided bills like these. I urge you to oppose all these bills and fully fund and support public schools and teachers to provide a free quality education to all of Missouri's children, allowing them to learn, grow, and thrive.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 1615		DATE: 2/12/2024
COMMITTEE: Special Committee on Education Reform		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: LISA PANNETT		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 12:00 AM
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MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MARGARET GARDNER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: gardner_m40@yahoo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/11/2024 1:26 AM
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I think any school defined under 167.031 should be removed from MOScholars



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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: MATT MICHELSON		PHONE NUMBER: 573-680-6188
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION		TITLE:
ADDRESS: PO BOX 458		
CITY: COLUMBIA		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65205
EMAIL: mmichelson@msta.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 12:13 PM
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MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MICHAEL DREYER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: mdreyer93@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 5:04 PM

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

The Missouri Legislature is pushing a number of bills that make it easier for parents to send kids to non-district schools and take money from Missouri's public schools, which are already struggling for funding. These bills reinforce redlining and worsen education inequality. Many proposed bills expand the existing MOScholars program, which provides private (often religious) school scholarships that are funded by donations eligible for tax credits. SB727 (Koenig) allows families with higher incomes to participate. SB 1118 (Coleman), HB 1671 (Matthiesen), HB 1615 (Hudson), HB 1738 (Richey), and HB 2104 (Christofanelli) expand it so more students qualify. SB 729 (Koenig) directly defunds public schools by providing parents with a tax credit for not sending their child to public school. All of these bills funnel tax money away from public schools and into private schools, which are often run by religious institutions. History tells us the dangers that come from unregulated private religious schools, from the horrors of the Indian Boarding Schools to the recent abuse at Agape. Missouri has a long history of valuing quality education. Black Missourians in St. Louis docked a steamboat in the middle of the Mississippi river to create the Floating Freedom School and secure their education in the mid-1800s. German immigrants to Missouri in the 1800s made kindergarten a national standard. Unfortunately, we've gone backwards in recent years and now rank at the bottom of the nation in education due to misguided bills like these. I urge you to oppose all these bills and fully fund and support public schools and teachers to provide a free quality education to all of Missouri's children, allowing them to learn, grow, and thrive.



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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: MIKE LODEWEGEN		PHONE NUMBER:
REPRESENTING: MO COUNCIL OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS		TITLE:
ADDRESS: 3550 AMAZONAS		
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65109
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 12:00 AM
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MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Special Committee on Education Reform			
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: NANCY COPENHAVER		PHONE NUMBER: 660-263-5725	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MISSOURI		TITLE: LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR, LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MI	
ADDRESS: 1512 RIDGELINE DRIVE			
CITY: MOBERLY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65270
EMAIL: copenhaver22@sbcglobal.net	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 7:53 PM	

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

LWVMO Testimony for Missouri House Special Committee on Educational Reform Monday, February 12, 1:00 p.m., HB 2104, HB 1738, HB 1615 The League of Women Voters of Missouri is opposed to expanding the Missouri Empowerment Scholarships from \$50 to \$75 million. Further expansion of vouchers in Missouri is detrimental to the public school system which is severely underfunded, as shown by the ranking near the bottom of the country in beginning teacher salaries and average teacher salaries. League opposes using public funds for home schools that are not required to meet the same standards as public schools. League opposes expanding this program to other areas of the state and expanding the income standard. League's position is that tax credit tuition plans and voucher plans compromise free, equitable, universal and quality public education for every student. Tax credit style school vouchers such as these can have disastrous effects on public schools and the local communities where they are located.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Special Committee on Education Reform		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: NANCY COPENHAVER		PHONE NUMBER: 660-263-5725
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MISSOURI		TITLE: LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR
ADDRESS: 1512 RIDGELINE DR.		
CITY: MOBERLY		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65270
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 12:00 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: OTTO FAJEN		PHONE NUMBER: 573-634-3202
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI NEA		TITLE: LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR
ADDRESS: 1810 EAST ELM STREET		
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65101
EMAIL: otto.fajen@mnea.org	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 10:18 AM

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The Association believes that state-mandated parental option plans (including tax credits for tuition to private schools and voucher plans) compromise free, equitable, universal and quality public education for every student. Local districts, in partnership with state and federal governments, must provide a quality education for every student by securing sufficient funding to maintain and to enhance excellence in each local public school district. The Association opposes the bill.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: RON BERRY		PHONE NUMBER: 660-537-2239	
REPRESENTING: AFT MISSOURI - AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS		TITLE: REGISTERED LOBBYIST	
ADDRESS: PO BOX 722			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65102
EMAIL: ronalddberr@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 8:33 PM	
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Oppose



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: SHERYL SCHMIDT		PHONE NUMBER: 417-616-1605
REPRESENTING: FAMILIES FOR HOME EDUCATION, INC.		TITLE:
ADDRESS: PO BOX 261		
CITY: MARYVILLE		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 65706
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 12:00 AM
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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SLOAN SHEFFIELD COWELL		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: sloansheffield13@gmail.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 9:44 AM
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MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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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: 2/11/2024 2:08 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

Public dollars should be directed to public schools only!



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SUSAN TOUCHON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL: touchon@sbcglobal.net	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 1:37 PM
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I oppose all Bills for voucher programs. These take away funds from public schools and many programs are not accredited and have no state oversight. Our taxes are for public schools and the funds should be used for the good of the public



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: TERESA DANIELEY		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: tkmithen@gmail.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/11/2024 5:16 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

I am the Rev. Dr. Teresa Danieley - Missioner for Public Advocacy for the Episcopal Diocese of Missouri and, most importantly regarding the bills presented today, the parent of three children in St. Louis Public Schools and President of the Mann Elementary PTO. Any use of public funds - taxpayers' funds - for private education is wrong. From the Network for Public Good: Vouchers, often misleadingly called "scholarships," divert tax dollars meant for public education to private schools that are not accountable to the public and generally do not serve the interests of struggling, low income students. In many areas of Missouri, there are NO private schools to use vouchers at all. Public schools are necessary to meet the needs of ALL students. -Vouchers are a "coupon program" for private education. Families who already send their children to private schools are often those who apply for and get the vouchers.-Vouchers don't expand education opportunities for low-income students. The amount of money contributed by the voucher is hardly ever enough to pay for full private school tuition. Private schools are not obligated to take vouchers. Often those that do are under-enrolled and struggling.- Vouchers promote discrimination. Despite receiving tax dollars, private voucher schools are often free to turn away students who are gay or transgender and students who don't subscribe to a religious doctrine. They can discriminate based on test scores and perceived ability.-Vouchers violate the separation of church and state. Once money leaves the public system, there's no public accountability for what the school teaches to students, including religious doctrines from specific religious perspectives. -Vouchers don't improve opportunities for struggling students. Private schools cherry-pick who they want to educate by limiting services for students with learning disabilities and enforcing strict academic or discipline entry requirements.-Vouchers don't improve education. The programs often have negative effects on the academic achievement of students.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: CARI ROGERS		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: caricae@gmail.com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 8:54 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

Chairman Davidson and Members of the Committee, My name is Cari Rogers and I'm from District 130. I have home educated my own children in Missouri for the past 17 years. I run Homeschoolers of Southwest Missouri, a Facebook support group for homeschoolers with 3,500 members as well as a 501c3 homeschool co-op, Anchor Christian Homeschoolers of SWMO, with 18 member families. I have helped home educators understand how to legally homeschool for over a decade. Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on HB1615. I am submitting testimony for informational purposes. One word homeschoolers identify with is freedom. Freedom; the ability to act without hindrance or restraint. Missouri home educators enjoy some of the freest homeschool laws in the country. It is my opinion that the MOScholars program and potential programs like it may impact homeschooler's abilities to continue to enjoy the robust freedom we have in home education. School Choice is fast becoming a household term. I believe in educational choice, it's because of choice that I have the ability to educate my own children at home. I believe the MOScholars program has the ability to become a superstar in the alternative education realm. I don't want to take away that choice from anyone. However, as a traditional homeschooler, the thought of more government being close to our choice of home education is alarming. I and many other homeschoolers feel that this is "too close for comfort". The fact that the program rules are optional only for those participating is also not a comfort to us homeschoolers. The Written Declaration of Enrollment is optional (RSMo 167.042), and yet homeschoolers have had more problems and issues with schools demanding that form and telling parents it is mandatory to sign - even when parents provide their own written notice of withdrawal - than can be counted. "Optional" is not a word homeschoolers trust. I would respectfully ask that the committee, bill sponsor, and House consider removing homeschool or any school defined under RSMo 167.031 as a qualified school. I am a compromiser by nature and I've done some research on alternatives rather than just ask you to remove homeschoolers. States such as Florida and New Hampshire have created a completely new category of students that utilize school choice funding with great success. The new category has its own definition and statute. This allows for parents to be able to choose the educational pathway for their students without worry of one option bleeding over into another. That is possibly an idea that the Legislature could entertain. I would be more than happy to talk with anyone about how two separate statutes could be effective. I would love nothing more than for traditional homeschoolers to be able to maintain the integrity of their mode of education. At the same time, we should be able to bring in the modern ideas of educational funding to the table. Homeschoolers by nature want to remain free from any sort of government interference. Please consider removing homeschool and any school defined under 167.031 from MOScholars. I am confident that a compromise can be reached.



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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: CHRIS VAS	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: HERZOG TOMORROW FOUNDATION	TITLE: SCHOLARSHIP DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS: 105 NW 188TH ST		
CITY: SMITHVILLE	STATE: MO	ZIP: 64089
EMAIL: cvas@herzogfoundation.com	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 2/12/2024 8:57 AM

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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 18 months of this life changing ESA program. Since July of 2023, the Herzog Tomorrow Foundation was able to raise close to \$6.9 Million in tax-credits from approximately 350 donors. We were able to turn those tax-credit donations around and fund over 1,100 scholarships to students and families attending one of our 85+ secular and religious partner schools. Of those students, almost 65% qualified with an IEP, or were below the 100% income level of free and reduced school lunch. These students were able to achieve their educational dreams. We hope to expand our impact and raise \$5 Million in 2024. This would allow us to serve an additional 170 students. 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 an approximate 85% renewal rate in 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. 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.