



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 3037		DATE: 2/9/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: HILLEL ANTON		PHONE NUMBER: 314-200-5781
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: AGUDATH ISRAEL OF MISSOURI		TITLE: EAO DIRECTOR
ADDRESS: 9433 OLIVE BLVD, STE 100		
CITY: OLIVETTE		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 63132
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2026 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: JEAN EVANS		PHONE NUMBER: 314-229-0827
REPRESENTING: AMERICAN FEDERATION FOR CHILDREN		TITLE:
ADDRESS: 1641 AWARD DR		
CITY: MANCHESTER		STATE: MO
		ZIP: 63021
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2026 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ARNIE "HONEST-ABE" DIENOFF-STATE PUBLIC ADVOCATE		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2026 11:50 PM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

I am Opposed to yet another Tax-Credit and Giveaway. These Tax-Credits are used as a commodity to the Highest and best Bidder. These Credits NEED to STOP!



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: KORTNIE HUDDLESTON		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2026 10:05 PM	

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

I am in opposition to HB3037, which would expand a program that diverts critical public revenue to private institutions. From a progressive perspective, this bill exacerbates the systemic underfunding of our public schools, which serve the vast majority of Missouri’s children, particularly those from low-income families, students with disabilities, and rural communities.

This tax credit scheme directly reduces the general revenue available for public education and other vital state services. By allowing a dollar-for-dollar credit against tax liability, it is essentially a backdoor voucher, subsidizing private school tuition with public money. These private schools are not held to the same standards of accountability, transparency, or non-discrimination as our public schools. They are not required to accept all students, which risks deepening segregation and inequality.

The bill’s \$75 million cap, which can grow automatically, represents a significant and growing loss to the state treasury. This money should be invested in proven public goods: hiring qualified teachers, reducing class sizes, updating materials, and supporting programs that benefit every child. Instead, this program allows a select group of taxpayers to direct their owed taxes to private organizations, creating a system where educational opportunity is increasingly determined by private preference rather than public commitment.

Finally, the trigger mechanism in the bill is unacceptable. It conditions the activation of this private scholarship program on a specific, high level of funding for public school transportation—a need that should be fully met unconditionally. This creates a perverse incentive and ties the wellbeing of our public school infrastructure to the expansion of a separate, private system.

We must reject this approach. Our collective responsibility is to strengthen the public schools that unite our communities and give every child a fair start. This bill moves us in the opposite direction. I urge you to vote no.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: MICHAEL DREYER		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2026 10:04 PM	

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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: NANCY ZELIFF		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/9/2026 9:28 PM
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I oppose any qualifying contribution to an educational assistance organization as it takes away state monies that should go to public schools only.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: PATRICIA DANIEL		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/8/2026 7:37 PM

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

I oppose HB 3037 because this is a tax voucher program which can additionally reduce public funding for education. The US Constitution and MO states there is a separation of church and state. Taxpayers who give educational assistance money to non-public schools (religious) should not be getting a tax break.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SARAH BERRY		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/5/2026 3:05 PM

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HB 3037 expands and entrenches a 100% tax-credit scheme that functions as a state-subsidized diversion of public revenue into privately administered education systems, while offering insufficient constitutional guardrails, weak fiscal accountability, and no enforceable equity protections for Missouri’s public school students.

1. This Is Not a “Tax Credit” — It Is a Full Public Revenue Diversion

HB 3037 authorizes dollar-for-dollar (100%) tax credits, capped at \$75 million annually, indexed upward with state aid.

That structure is materially different from traditional incentive credits:

- The state forgoes revenue entirely**
- Funds are never appropriated through the General Assembly**
- Oversight is delegated to private educational assistance organizations**

This is functionally off-budget public spending, insulated from annual appropriations review and voter accountability.

The Missouri Constitution vests taxing and spending authority in the legislature — not in private intermediaries operating outside the budget process.¹

2. Public Funds, Private Control, Minimal Transparency

- Although framed as “private contributions,” the credits are:**
- Certified by the State Treasurer**
- Limited by statewide caps**
- Adjusted based on state aid formulas**

That makes these funds public in effect, yet:
Educational assistance organizations are not subject to Sunshine Law transparency

Taxpayers have no public accounting of student outcomes

There is no enforceable requirement that scholarships serve students displaced by underperforming

districts

This is a delegation problem, not a charity program.

3. Equity Language Without Enforcement Is Not Equity

HB 3037 contains no measurable equity requirements, no:
Geographic parity protections
Disability-access mandates
Transportation guarantees
Civil-rights compliance enforcement tied to funding eligibility

The bill also explicitly conditions its operation on transportation funding thresholds, effectively holding public school infrastructure hostage while diverting funds elsewhere.

That is policy coercion, not reform.

4. Constitutional Risk: Public Purpose & Uniformity

Missouri courts have repeatedly held that public expenditures must serve a clear public purpose and operate with uniformity.

A system that:
Benefits taxpayers with sufficient liability to claim credits
Routes funds through private entities
Shields recipient institutions from public accountability

raises serious questions under Missouri’s public-purpose doctrine and equal-protection principles.²

Litigation risk here is not hypothetical — it is structural.

5. Pattern Concern:

Parallel Bills, Same Outcome

HB 3037 mirrors a broader legislative pattern this session:
Expansion of tax-credit programs
Reduction of legislative oversight
Increased reliance on private intermediaries
Long sunset windows that entrench programs before outcomes are evaluated

This is structural drift, not isolated policy.

Conclusion

If the General Assembly wishes to support educational opportunity, it should do so:
On-budget
With uniform accountability
Through transparent appropriations
Without hollowing out the public school funding base

HB 3037 fails those tests.

Missouri does not lack generosity — it lacks accountability mechanisms robust enough to ensure public dollars serve public obligations.

Legislators serious about stewardship, transparency, and the constitutional role of the General Assembly should vote NO on HB 3037 and demand education policy that withstands both fiscal scrutiny and constitutional review.

Footnotes:

Missouri Constitution, art. III, §§ 36–39 (appropriations and fiscal control); art. IV, § 28 (budgetary

accountability).

Missouri public-purpose doctrine; see *Curchin v. Missouri Industrial Development Board*, 722 S.W.2d 930 (Mo. banc 1987); *State ex rel. Kansas City v. Smith*, 74 S.W.2d 367 (Mo. 1934).



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SUSAN GIBSON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/8/2026 8:31 PM

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This tax voucher grift would adversely affect funding for public education. Please do not advance this bill.