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Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

The Illinois tax credit scholarship program has proven to be a beacon of hope and a guiding force toward a better life for thousands of Illinois students and their families. However, that light may be snuffed out unless the Illinois General Assembly acts to continue the law that provides for this program. Therefore, we are writing to ask you to contact your Illinois state representative and state senator to express your desire to retain the tax credit scholarship program.

Since its inception six years ago, the tax credit scholarship program has generated overwhelmingly positive results. Nearly 40,000 scholarships have been awarded to students attending private schools in the state. These scholarships are funded through contributions from donors who receive a 75% tax credit for their donation on their Illinois state income tax. All of the scholarships are need-based. Without this program, Illinois families may be unable to send their loved ones to the school of their choice. Demand for scholarships is high - for every scholarship granted, three students were turned down due to lack of funds.

Allowing the tax credit scholarship program to sunset would not only be a life altering disservice to the families it is designed to help, but would also create long-term consequences by weakening the state's educational choices and placing additional roadblocks in front of thousands of Illinois students on the path to a brighter future.

Please contact your state representative and state senator to let them know you support extending the tax credit scholarship program in Illinois law. We also encourage you to urge your fellow parishioners to do so also. Our collective voice is needed. To assist in this endeavor, please visit the Catholic Conference of Illinois website at www.ilcatholic.org or call the Springfield office at (217) 528-9200 for further information on how to locate your elected officials, request sample wording for a possible message to send, or for information about how to donate.

+ *Blase J. Cupich*

His Eminence Cardinal Blase J. Cupich
Archbishop of Chicago

+ *Ronald A. Hicks*

Most Reverend Ronald Hicks
Bishop of Joliet

+ *Thomas John Paprocki*

Most Reverend Thomas John Paprocki
Bishop of Springfield in Illinois

+ *Michael M. McGovern*

Most Reverend Michael McGovern
Bishop of Belleville

+ *David J. Malloy*

Most Reverend David J. Malloy
Bishop of Rockford

+ *Louis Tylka*

Most Reverend Louis Tylka
Bishop of Peoria