



# New York State Catholic Conference

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## Statement of the NYS Catholic Conference

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NYSUT and their allies recently issued a memorandum of opposition to the proposed Education Investment Tax Credit in an attempt to discredit the legislation's worthy and socially valuable purposes. They are not only misguided in their efforts but completely inaccurate in their description of the bill's provisions and effects.

In fact, they make claims about provisions that are not even contained in the legislation.

To set the record straight, the legislation:

1. Contains provisions that offset the state tax credit against a federal tax benefit derived from the same charitable donation, to ensure no donor reaps a financial profit from their donation.
2. Includes income-eligibility levels to ensure that scholarships funded with creditable donations are provided to children of lower-income and working families.
3. Requires a two-week "open donation" period during which any taxpayer regardless of income can become eligible for a tax credit by committing to making an eligible donation. That ensures that tax credits will be open to any and all New Yorkers who wish to contribute to a non-profit scholarship fund or a public school or public school district.
4. Is consistent with all constitutional provisions and does not expend tax dollars directly or indirectly to a parochial school. It simply enhances the tax benefit *already provided* to those who donate to non-profit scholarship funds, public schools and public school districts.
5. Provides more than half of the benefit to the public school community through direct donations to public schools, organizations serving public schools and a \$200 tax credit to every teacher for out-of-pocket expenses for classroom supplies and materials

Furthermore, New York State already provides some \$4.6 billion in state tax credits every year for a myriad of purposes, including job creation, brownfields redevelopment, local beer brewing and more. Some \$427 million is expended on credits for Hollywood film and TV show production.

Of the \$4.6 billion in existing New York State tax credits, exactly *zero* goes to elementary and secondary education. *Wolf of Wall Street*, yes. Scholarships for poor children, no.

New York can do better to address educational and income inequality among children and families. The Education Investment Tax Credit would do just that.