



MEMO IN OPPOSITION

A.2551 (Cusick) S.1976 (Golden)

Part E of A.3006/S.2006 (Executive Budget)

We strongly oppose A.2551/S.1976 and Part E of A.3006/S.2006, which would enact the Education Investment Incentives Tax Credit.

These bills divert hundreds of millions of dollars away from public schools and services. In the first three years alone, \$675 million (\$300 million under Part E of A.3006/S.2006) would be siphoned from the General Fund – monies that should be supporting public schools and other public services.

Worse yet, this legislation does nothing to help low wealth, high-need students, or middle or low-income donors. Rather, it would allow the wealthy to avoid their tax liability while withholding the taxes they owe to support the public good.

We cannot continue to divert resources from our schools, communities and public services, while we ask our schools and students to raise standards and reach higher expectations.

New York's public school children are still owed \$4 billion under the Campaign for Fiscal Equity lawsuit and \$1 billion under the Gap Elimination Adjustment. How can hundreds of millions of dollars in tax giveaways to the wealthy be justified when our public schools and students are still struggling and the state is not funding the sound basic education that its own constitution requires?

The introduction of this proposed scheme would create an annual funding battle between public and private schools and a never-ending debate over expansion of such credits.

The state Constitution also prohibits direct or indirect financial aid to private schools that are under the control of a religious denomination or where religious tenets are taught and mandates an adequately funded public school system. Private schools, their curriculum, and their funding structures are a choice. Public education is a constitutionally mandated function of state government, obligated to serve all children and accountable to all voters.

This tax giveaway is unprecedented in that it shifts state dollars - of which there are a finite amount - away from aid to public education and services and into privatized educational institutions.

We must properly support our public schools and services that serve our communities. For the aforementioned reasons, we strongly oppose this legislation and urge its defeat.

Organizations in Opposition to the Education Investment Incentive Credit

A. Philip Randolph Institute
AFSCME
Advocates for Children of New York
Alliance for Quality Education
Balcony
CBTU
Citizen Action
CSEA
DC 37, AFSCME
La Fuente
League of Women Voters of NYS
Long Island Jobs with Justice
Long Island Progressive Coalition
Make the Road
NAACP-NYS Chapter
New York City Council of School Supervisors and Administrators
New York Civil Liberties Union
New York State AFL-CIO
New York State Association of School Business Officials
New York State Federation of School Administrators
New York State PTA
New York State School Boards Association
New York State United Teachers (NYSUT)
New Yorkers for Fiscal Fairness
Public Employees Federation (PEF)
Reform Jewish Voice of NYS
Rochester – Finger Lakes Pride @ Work
Rural Schools Association of NYS
School Administrators Association of New York State
Strong Economy for All
The Black Institute
The Council of School Superintendents
United Federation of Teachers (UFT)
Working Families